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MODERN RUSSIAN HISTORY

This work has been translated from the original Russian by
ALEXANDER S. KAUN
who is also the author of the last chapters dealing with the reign of Nicolas II.

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MODERN RUSSIAN HISTORY

Being an authoritative and detailed history of Russia from the Age of Catherine the Great to the Present

By ALEXANDER KORNILOV

Professor at the Politechnicum of Peter the Great in Petrograd

Volume One

The Borzoi
ALFRED A. KNOPF
New York MCMXVI

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREFACE

This "History of Russia in the Nineteenth Century" is based upon a course of lectures which I have been delivering since 1909 before the senior students of the Politechnicum of Peter the Great in Petrograd. It appears now in three parts, of which the first, beside two introductory chapters that contain a rapid sketch of the developmental process of the Russian state and people before the nineteenth century, presents the general evolutionary course of national and political life in Russia in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, up to the accession of Nicolas I. The second part contains a general survey of the internal life in Russia during the reign of Nicolas I and during the first, reformatory, period of the reign of Alexander II (to the year 1866). The third part deals with the history of Russia in the last thirty-five years.

I consider it my duty to mention with the deepest gratitude the late Professor V. O. Kluchevsky, in whose works I have found enormous aid for the formation of my own views on the course of Russian history in modern times.

THE AUTHOR.

Petrograd, January, 1912.

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PART ONE

MODERN RUSSIAN HISTORY

CHAPTER I

I SUPPOSE that for every conscious man, whether he adheres to the idealistic or to the materialistic point of view, his own life becomes meaningful and significant only after he has found for himself a place in that collective labour and struggle of humanity by which "man liveth." Of course, in defining one's place in social life a person is guided primarily by the general *Weltanschauung* he has already formed and adapted. I do not pretend to influence my readers in this respect in one direction or another, but I presume that it is of great value for every man, even for one with a quite definite outlook upon life, to acquire a clear conception about that historical process in one of whose stages he is destined to live and act consciously. I shall not enter here into a discussion of the rôle of the individual in history. However negligible this rôle may appear in the eyes of those who profess the point of view of economic materialism, yet, I think, not even they will deny the need of orientation in surrounding phenomena for one who intends to be a social worker and a conscientious citizen.

In order to orient ourselves in the process of a nation's evolving life, particularly in that stage of the process in which we are to act, we must clearly conceive this process by studying all the circumstances amidst which it is taking place. And one can know the circumstances of the evolutionary process of any human society, naturally, by learning its history.

A few words about the contents of this course and the method of its structure. Under the history of Russia, I understand the process of the development of the Russian state. The state, as it is generally known, consists of three elements: the territory, the population settled in that territory, and the supreme power which unites the population into a political whole. From the point of view of political science all these elements are tantamount and equivalent in the sense that all of them are equally necessary for the formation of the modern idea of state. But from the point of view of the historian the inner significance of the three elements is far from being homologous. For the historian the subject of history is always man, human society, people. The state itself is doubtless the product of human activity, of human life. It is undisputable that the territory exists for the population and not *vice versa,* and at present it is likewise beyond dispute that the state-power exists for the people, and not the people for the state-power; furthermore, that the state-power is the product of human activity and life in a larger degree than is the territory; for whereas the latter is a self-sufficient quantity regardless of its population, the state-power is a direct product of human activity. Consequently for us the subject of the historical process expressed in the creation and development of a commonwealth is human society — a people; in this case the people that have created the Russian state.

We conceive the population composing a state as a nation of a definite territory united by one supreme power. The Russian state is composed, as we know, not only of Russian people in the proper ethnological sense of the word, but of a large number of tribes and nationalities of which some have become partly Russified and some have preserved their national physiognomy in a more or less full measure. On the other hand, beside this so to say vertical subdivision into races, the population of the Russian state may be classified also horizontally, into various

orders and classes, differing juridically, economically, and socially. Finally, we must distinguish out of the common national mass the so-called *intelligentzia,* the intellectual body composed of men of various orders and classes, standing apart by virtue of their education and consciousness of ideals as well as by their aim not only to build up consciously their own life, but to exercise their influence on the life-structure of the whole nation according to their ideas and views.

Concerning the vertical subdivision of the population (into races), I must say at the outset that in this necessarily brief course I shall not be able to trace the development of each nationality separately, but shall expound mainly the history of the Russian people, touching the history of other parts of the population only inasmuch as certain events, problems, and processes in the development of particular nationalities concern the interests of the Russian state in general. From this point of view I shall discuss the general problem of nationalism and non-Russian elements in the state, as well as the various local events, conflicts, and questions that have arisen or developed during the nineteenth century in the midst of diverse nationalities.

As to the horizontal subdivision (i.e., into orders, classes, *intelligentzia,* etc.), I feel obliged to give, difficult as it may be, a possibly full exposition of the history of the *whole* nation, not of one class or another, nor of the educated society only, but indeed of the entire people, else the aim of my course, as I stated it in the beginning, would not be attained.

Such is the subject-matter of this course. A question may arise, whether I shall analyse the external or the internal history of the Russian state and people; whether I shall expound mainly the social, cultural history of Russia, or the so-to-speak external pragmatic history of the Russian state. Of what I have already said you may probably expect an exposition not of the external history of Russia, but of its social, cultural, inner history. This does not mean, of course, that we shall abso-

lutely ignore the international relations and situation of Russia, which have always, and particularly in the nineteenth century, influenced to a great extent the internal processes in which we are interested. It means only that we shall occupy ourselves not with battle courses, not with heroic deeds and biographies of generals, not with the skill of diplomats, but with the general trend of world events and with those results that have been reflected upon the internal life of the Russian state. As to the socio-political process through which the Russian people and state have passed during the nineteenth century, we shall study it thoroughly in all respects, i.e., in the *economic,* by which I have in mind the development of national wealth as well as the conflict of class interests; in the *political* — the history of state institutions, of the people's attitude towards the state-power, of the interrelations of orders and classes, and, in general, of the political evolution and struggle; and in the *ideational,* by which I mean the enlightenment-movement and the development of the national ideology. One may conclude from the aforesaid that I intend to give not a pragmatic (in the narrow sense of the word) exposition of historical events and of individual acts, but a general picture of the development of culture and socio-political life in Russia during the nineteenth century. Yet I must beg to observe that although I do not intend to offer a pragmatic history proper, this course is expounded not in form of general deductions and conclusions in regard to the character and direction of the forces active in the process under observation, but in the form of a minutely elaborate picture of the general course of events, as they have taken place in reality. Hence I shall endeavour to relate clearly and specifically all the big historical facts in their chronological connection with reality, striving to clarify at the same time their interrelation and their rôle in that socio-political process which interests us. I should like, at any rate, to give in this course not a finished system of conclusions, not an established theory,

but chiefly carefully studied facts and a clear understanding of their mutual relation and of their importance in the development of Russia.

Therefore if I should employ the term "pragmatic history" in a somewhat broader sense, in contradistinction from that history without proper names, without events and dates, from that algebraic history to which some sociologists reduce the purpose of cultural history and historical sociology, then in this expanded sense the exposition of my course may be called pragmatic. I think this inevitable in a case where there are as yet but a few well-established data, and particularly where the course comprises not the history of mankind as a whole, and not even the history of one nation through all its extent, but the history of one century of one nation.

Before approaching the history of the nineteenth century I must characterise at least in most general terms the whole socio-political process of Russian development, of which the nineteenth century presents only one stage.[1]

The first nine centuries of Russian history, if we start from the early chronicles to the middle of the eighteenth century, or the first eleven centuries, if we reckon from the supposed beginning of the distribution of the northeastern Slavic tribes (i.e., approximately from the seventh century), had been occupied in the main with the settling process of the tribes that have eventually formed the Russian nationality, and with the formation of a national territory. The first historical data concerning the origin of the Russian state go back to the ninth century. After the centre of the then political life had been established in Kiev, the Dnieper-Russ in the tenth century began to blossom luxuriously as a formative military-commercial state which,

[1] For a more detailed and thorough study of Russian political and social development I recommend two excellent works: V. O. Kluchevsky, "Course of Russian History" in 4 parts, and P. N. Miliukov, "History of Russian Culture" in 3 parts. (The first work has been translated by Hogarth.)

as all states of a similar type, had based its rising culture and wealth on military plunder, on widely developed slavery, and on an armed, well-scattered trade in slaves and other objects of military booty. But this developing state was not destined to become a firm and enduring political body. Towards the end of the twelfth century under the pressure of the steppe-invaders, the Kiev principality fell into decay, and the population that had peacefully settled on the banks of the Dnieper and had attempted to establish there an agricultural state became a prey of wild marauders. The constantly recurring attacks of the steppe-raiders caused the growing migration of the Dnieper-Russians into the Susdal district of the Volga and its tributary, Oka, where at present we find the provinces of Moscow, Yaroslavl, Vladimir, Kostroma, and Nizhni-Novgorod. There the climate was more severe, and the soil less fertile, but the farmer could safely settle among the scattered peaceful Finnish tribes.

This region had become, according to the expression of Professor Kluchevsky, the cradle of the Great Russian tribe which had formed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the second half of the twelfth century it became the political centre of Russian life, and an attempt was even made to create a consolidated monarchy. The attempt was undertaken by Prince Andrey Bogoliubsky, and was followed up by Vsevolod Big Nest; both had failed, however. The dissensions of the Princes had not ceased, Russ had not been ready yet to accept a monarchical rule, and in the meantime the Mongols invaded the land, which they held for three hundred years. The appanage system was firmly established in the devastated land for two centuries, a period of incessant strifes and internecine warfare. At the same time the land was constantly pressed and robbed by preying neighbours: from the east and the south the Tartars, from the northwest, the Lithuanians, the Poles, the Livonian Knights, the Swedes. From the year 1228 to

1462, i.e., for the period of two hundred and thirty-four years, the land had borne, according to Professor Kluchevsky's calculation, ninety internal wars among the Princes and one hundred and sixty foreign invasions. Yet during that trying period, under the shadow of the Tartar yoke, the Great Russian tribe had become definitely formed and strengthened in the incessant struggle with nature and men, and synchronously in its consciousness had grown and matured the need of a firm and single state-power which could unite the people, and with thus united forces repulse the enemies. For this reason when after a series of favourable circumstances the principality of Moscow had succeeded in establishing a strong dynasty capable of the unification of Russia, all the classes of society with the higher clergy and *boyars* at their head willingly upheld the ambitions of the Moscow Princes. Ivan Kalita and his successors accomplished that for which Andrey Bogoliubsky had striven in vain; by the middle of the fifteenth century, at the accession of Ivan III, there were present in the Grand Principality of Moscow all the elements of a state united by a strong single power, although it had not yet been completely free from foreign rule.

But that state, if it was to endure and grow, was confronted with enormous tasks that demanded for their fulfilment centuries of time, heroic self-sacrifice, and a tremendous strain upon all national forces. First of all it had to acquire complete political independence, and to throw off definitely the already weakened Tartar yoke. The achievement of this task was facilitated by the internal dissensions of the Golden Horde, which finally brought its dissolution.

Much more difficult was the accomplishment of the other tasks, the consolidation and unification of the Russian lands, and the strengthening and protection of the national territory. Both aims were interdependent, and rooted in the consciousness of the people.

The situation of the young Moscow state in the fifteenth cen-

tury was precarious. A glance at the map will make this clear.[2] From the east and the south, even after the overthrow of the Tartar rule, Moscow had been threatened by constant invasions and raids of nomad-hordes which were grouped after the fall of the Golden Horde in three Tzardoms, three rapacious restless nests, that of Kazan, of Astrakhan, and of Crimea. On the west and southwest was consolidated at that time the strong kingdom of Poland-Lithuania, which had absorbed the remnants of the Dnieper-Russ and of the West-Russ, and had threatened to swallow up the other Russian territories. The frontiers of that formidable neighbour almost touched Moscow in the fifteenth century. To the northwest of Moscow lay the dominions of its ardent foe and rival, the Grand Duke of Tver; on the north the Moscow territories bordered and merged with the territories and colonies of Great Lord Novgorod, the city-republic in which the masses strove for union with Moscow, while the upper classes intrigued against Moscow with Lithuania and Poland. Finally in the very centre of the Muscovite state lay territories that were appanages of the Princes of Rostov and Yaroslav. These last were peacefully annexed to Moscow by Ivan III. The enormous dominions of Novgorod, the principality of Tver, Pskov, Oriol, and Riazan (the last as late as 1520) were ultimately annexed after stubborn fighting.

The Tartar yoke was overthrown in 1480, but the subjugation of the Volga-Tartars took place only in the second half of the sixteenth century, and up to that time Ivan III, Vassily III, and Ivan IV had to undertake not less than ten expeditions against the Tzar of Kazan to keep off his raids. Kazan was conquered in 1552, Astrakhan in 1556, but the Khan of Crimea preserved his formidable sway over the whole south of Russia until the eighteenth century. More than once during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Crimean Tar-

[2] See the map at the end of this volume.

tars appeared at the walls of Moscow, on which occasions they captured hundreds of thousands of men and women and filled the Eastern slave-markets with Russian captives.

The protection of Russian frontiers from Lithuania, and the reconquest of old Russian territories from Lithuania and Poland had occupied the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and were properly accomplished only at the end of the eighteenth century. During the reign of Alexis the annexation of the left shore of Ukraina brought the first long peace with Poland (1667); but the ancient lands that had formed parts of the Dnieper-Russ were restored to Russia only after the division of Poland under Catherine II. By straining the nation's forces to the uttermost Peter the Great succeeded at the beginning of the eighteenth century in conquering Lifland, Estland, and Ingermanland from Sweden and thus joined the Baltic coast to Russia. It was only after the conquest of Crimea and the division of Poland, i.e., towards the end of the eighteenth century, that the tasks which were put forth by the natural course of events in the time of Ivan III, could be considered accomplished. Only since Russia had pushed its boundaries towards the Black and the Caspian seas on the south and towards the Baltic on the west, could the formation of the state territory of the great Tzardom be considered finished, at least in its general features, and there came at last the time when the powers and means of the country could be concentrated toward the satisfaction of the needs of the people themselves.

At what expense was this formation of a state-territory accomplished, and what were the socio-political consequences of this centuries-long process?

We know that in modern times a few months' warfare swallows up the budget of a whole year. In the past the state budgets were not large, and the governments did not spend any big, in the modern scale, sums for either preparation or management of wars; but the very wars were not less but more

devastating and ruinous than those of the present. Whereas now the enemy's attack is aimed mainly at armies, war-vessels, and armed fortresses, in those days the devastation of the land was inevitable, the civil population suffered mutilation and tortures and enslavement, cattle were slaughtered or carried away, buildings were set afire, property was destroyed or plundered. Russ suffered such consequences of war not only from raids of savage hordes, not only from Lithuanian invasions, but from their own Orthodox Christian brethren in times of internecine wars among the Princes, and especially during the struggles of the Muscovites with their most stubborn opponents, Tver and Novgorod. The annals of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries abound in descriptions of bloody murders, atrocities, and systematic ravages promulgated by the armies of the Muscovite princes in the towns and villages of the Grand Principality of Tver and in the territories of Great Novgorod, until these lands had finally been brought under the dominion of the "Collectors of Russian Soil." It is needless to mention the havoc and chastisements inflicted by the Tartar invasions which occurred periodically during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly on the part of the Crimean Tartars. The human loss on battlefields was not so great as the loss in men, women, and children who were captured and sold into slavery by the Mongols. In order to protect the frontiers from the steppe hordes the Government had to construct abatis and outposts for hundreds of versts along the southern border, from the shores of Oka and its tributaries about Riazan far to the west. Beside this it had to mobilise every spring thousands of soldiers for the defence of that frontier.[3] With the

[3] According to the testimony of Fletcher, the English ambassador to Russia in the sixteenth century, the yearly mobilisation for the southern frontier amounted to 65,000 men. Professor Kluchevsky gives the same number. P. N. Miliukov quotes the figures of the southern army in the seventeenth century as considerably smaller than those of Fletcher. At any rate the fact of yearly mobilisations of many

view of protection from the steppe raiders the Government of Moscow built more and more new cities, continuously pushing the chain of outposts farther to the south, settling military colonies there which were to serve as a living fence. Thus the colonisation of the fertile steppe region to the south of Moscow went on. In the same time in the west a stubborn struggle had taken place against Lithuania, Poland, the Livonian Knights, and the Swedes. From the end of the fifteenth to the end of the sixteenth century there were three great wars with Sweden and seven long exasperating wars with Poland and its temporary ally, the Livonian Order. These wars occupied on the whole fifty years. According to contemporaries the number of Russian men in operation reached at times two hundred to three hundred thousand, while the entire population of the Muscovite state at that time did not exceed several million souls of both sexes. National wealth was exclusively natural, hence a pecuniary upkeep of the army was out of question. In the words of Professor Kluchevsky, the Muscovite Government possessed a single capital acquired during the "Collection of Russian Soil"— enormous stretches of land, partly peopled by peasants, partly waste.

This capital was put into circulation for the maintenance of the large "serving" class which grew out of proportion. From this resulted at first the "estate system," and later the "bondage system." [4] The upkeep of the serving class had become the dominant interest in the Muscovite state at the expense of all other national interests, and it required the sacrifice of all the

thousands for the protection of the southern frontier from the Tartars has been documentally established.

[4] For the history of the "estate" and "bondage" systems the author recommends a number of works which are unfortunately inaccessible to non-Russian readers. The English reader will find helpful chapters on the question in the first two volumes of Kluchevsky's History, in the first volume of J. Mavor's "An Economic History of Russia," and in M. Kovalevsky's "Russian Political Institutions."— TRANSLATOR.

live forces of the land. The inevitable constant and durable strain of all the means of the country which was sparsely populated and forced to protect, guard, and extend the already too far extended boundaries, resulted in the compulsion of the whole populace to bear state-service in one way or another. The idea of general service, and its concomitant idea of "binding" the classes, were consequences of such a state of affairs. This continuous mobilisation of all the national forces for the formation and strengthening of the state territory brought along another political result — the enormous increase of the central authority. Under the stress of foreign invasions and internal strifes and dissensions the Russian people as far back as in the fourteenth century had extended a helping hand to the Muscovite princes in their struggle for a dictatorship over the disunited country. But with the course of events the interests of the central power fell more and more in line with the interests of the serving class, for whose sake the supreme authorities did not hesitate to sacrifice the freedom of the peasants. The serving men in their turn helped the central power to break down the *boyar* class who attempted to maintain certain political prerogatives.

The larger part of the arable soil, in the centre of the state, on the west, south, and southeast, had become the possession of the serving class, as military benefices or as hereditary estates. In the interests of this class the peasants were gradually bound to their land, and given over to their masters into personal bondage, partly in fact, and partly juridically.

In the meantime wars and military needs did not diminish, but on the contrary continually increased. The life and death struggle with the western neighbours forced Russia to follow closely their standard of military organisation. Expensive firearms and foreign instructors had to be imported in large numbers, to cite one instance. This sort of militarism demanded not only the maintenance of the serving class, but a consider-

able expenditure of money, for which again the nation's strength had to be strained to the utmost. In quest of financial sources there arose and gradually took root a peculiar fiscal system based on the idea of general *tyaglo* or tax, which in the absence of local state institutions necessitated the *mutual guarantee* system within each taxable group, and later the fixation of those groups as classes in the Muscovite state. This process took place in the rural as well as in the urban population.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century this process of the formation of state-classes and of the socio-political structure of the Russian commonwealth was practically accomplished in its general features. At the same time the strain of the national means and forces had reached its apogee, though the task of fixing and strengthening the national territory was far from completion. Until the middle of the seventeenth century, despite the tenacious struggles, the work of consolidating the Russian lands in the west had not progressed, and the western frontier still remained extremely precarious and indefinite. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Muscovite state could hardly resist the aggressive moves of the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom and of Sweden. At the beginning of the seventeenth century by the peace of Stolbovsk the outlet into the Baltic Sea was affixed to Sweden, and this at the time when Russian oversea commerce had become especially important and was badly needed, since the natural wealth could no longer satisfy the growing needs of the state.

Towards the time of the reign of Peter the Polish-Lithuanian kingdom, owing to internal causes, had begun to lose its power, and thus Russia was enabled to concentrate its western forces on the struggle with Sweden. This struggle, lasting two whole decades and complicated by a hard war with Turkey, almost drained the nation.

Peter finally succeeded in fulfilling his task, or rather the task bequeathed to him by the preceding centuries: Sweden

was defeated, Ingria, Korelia, and Estland, conquered by Ivan III and subsequently lost by Ivan IV, were reannexed together with Lifland, thus giving Russia the coveted outlet to the Baltic. Petersburg was founded. Russia, hardly known to the West in the time of Ivan III, became a European Power, while its ancient rival, Poland, descended to the degree of a second-rate state patronised by its neighbours and rent by internal dissensions.

Peter's success in his conflict with Sweden has borne enormous consequences for Russia, but that success was gained at a terrible price. According to Miliukov, Russia paid for her promotion to a European Power with the ruination of the country. Indeed such an impoverishment, such a drainage of national means and sources, Russia had not experienced even during the Interregnum period.[5] For the war, for the construction of Petersburg, for the building of the navy, there were needed not only enormous financial means, but also men. Long before — early in the seventeenth century, the forces of the serving class proving insufficient for carrying on the struggle with the western neighbours, standing regiments were formed of the *Streltzy* (musketeers), and later *Reiter* (cavalry) and dragoons, and artillery of a foreign model. These armies were composed not only of the nobility and their retinues, but also of new cadres specially recruited from the population in time of war. Under Peter, beginning with 1701, the recruitments had become a yearly contribution of the people, not only for the ranks of the reformed army, but also for the construction of Petersburg and for other state works. These recruitments and the enormously increased taxes were responsible for the fact that during the period of time between the eighties of the seventeenth century and the twenties of the next century one-fifth of Russian households disappeared. One part of

[5] From the death of Boris Godunov — 1605 — to the accession of the first Romanov — in 1613.— TRANSLATOR.

this unusual human loss was a direct victim of war, another part consisted of those who fled from the burden of unbearable taxation. It is possible, even probable, that the actual depopulation during those thirty years was less; a part of the dissolved households had doubtless been somehow redistributed among the remaining households, but at any rate the fact of the destruction of twenty per cent. of those units is beyond question.

Peter's government had simultaneously to fight his enemies and to preserve the land from total ruination. It had to sharpen its wits in hunting the fugitive citizen who tried to evade the immense state burdens, and at the same time it had to seek means for the upholding and developing of industry and trade in the impoverished country. In the first decade of the eighteenth century two hundred thousand labour-men were drawn out of the sparse population, and at least half of them had perished. The state budget exceeded many times that of the end of the seventeenth century, and three quarters of it went for the upkeep of the army and navy, while all the other needs of the great state had to be satisfied with the remaining one-fourth. All the poll-taxes from the non-exempt classes, which at that time formed the lion's share of the state income, were exclusively spent on the maintenance of the army; all the indirect taxes, on the navy expenditures. In his struggle with fugitives and evaders Peter had definitely fixed the bondage system, and had equalised the bonded peasants with the *Kholopy*,[6] while the brunt of the heavy military duty was borne no longer by the serving class alone, but by the tax-paying population. Military service had become an additional heavy burden on the back of the people.

Such was the strain of national resources under Peter. Yet his success proved permanent. In spite of the profligacy and disorderliness of his incapable and casual successors up to Cath-

[6] Personal property of the owner, practically slaves.—TRANSLATOR.

erine II, and owing to a large extent to happy conjectures in foreign affairs, the national borders established by Peter remained and even somewhat extended to the south and southwest.

By the time of Catherine II Poland was quite ripe for dissolution, and Russia received without much effort not only the ancient regions that had formed parts of Dnieper-Russ, but also Lithuania and Curland. Turkey likewise grew steadily weaker, and after two successful wars Russia conquered at length Crimea, its old menace, and the northern coast of the Black Sea. On the southwest its border line was the river Dniester, on the south, the Black Sea, on the southwest, the rivers Kuban and Terek. The international situation of the great empire was mightier and more brilliant than that of any contemporary European Power.

The task of forming and strengthening the national territory, which had stood before the Russian nation since Ivan III and which had absorbed and drained all its forces and means during many centuries, could at length be considered accomplished.

That moment appeared to be the turning point in the development of Russia. A quite new historical process began and with it modern Russian history. If before Catherine the main slogan of the state-power had been the consolidation of the old lands, the protection of the national territory, and the imperial aggrandisement, during her reign new tendencies appeared in the consciousness of the nation and of the Government itself. The chief aim of the state was no longer the expansion of the country, but the well-being of the subjects. Catherine definitely formulated that principle at her very accession to the throne. In her desire to acquire the love and loyalty of her subjects she declared in one manifest after another her intention to devote all her time and energy to the improvement of internal conditions rather than to promote external grandeur.

We may regard critically the fulfilment of her promises, though it is impossible to deny the great cultural importance of her reign, but it is worth noticing, at any rate, the change in the formulation of the fundamental state problems.

Under Peter *all* national forces were still directed toward territorial formation; from Catherine on problems of national welfare, of material and spiritual well-being, were moved to the foreground. Alongside with these began the gradual unbinding of the classes that had been bound during the territorial struggles. The process of unbinding was slow and long, growing complicated and obstructed by a mass of concomitant phenomena and circumstances, but it began at once, as soon as there came a possibility of releasing the strain of the nation's forces in the incessant struggle for territory. Then, concurrently with the unbinding of classes began the general liberation of the people from oppression and burdens that had been accumulated through centuries of tension, and finally the gradual loosening of the basis of the supreme dictatorship, which originated in the time of the Muscovite Tzars owing to the constant perils of struggle.

This complex process of the unbinding of classes, of the liberation of the people, and of the relaxation of the monarchical power, becomes the history of Russia in the nineteenth century. Its culmination is taking place in our own days, but its starting point belongs to the end of the eighteenth century, to the moment when the lasting struggle for the formation of the national territory came to an end.

At first the questions of popular welfare and enlightenment came to the front. In fact those questions were not new. The idea of the nation's welfare and even of its enlightenment was not foreign to the pre-Petrine Muscovite governments, but this idea was completely pushed to the background by current urging needs in the tense struggle for territory.

We should be quite unjust to Peter if we did not acknowledge

that he was particularly interested in the weal and education of his people. But that mighty titan, engulfed more than any of his predecessors in territorial struggle, was able to give but little attention to popular needs, and even that by fits and starts. Owing to the demands and exactions of the exhausting, all absorbing struggle, the questions of internal welfare had in his eyes a dependent, subservient importance. Hence even those measures which he undertook for the encouragement of commerce and industry, and for the dissemination of education, had an official, technical character. The Petrine factories and foundries served in the main fiscal interests, and produced primarily things that were needed for the equipment of the army and navy. The Petrine schools were chiefly professional, technical, e.g., those of navigation, of artillery, of engineering, and the lower "cipher" schools. Even the Theological Academy he, evidently, had intended to turn into a peculiar politechnicum which would furnish men for clerical service, for civil offices, and for military, architectural, and medical professions.

Under Catherine the questions of common weal and enlightenment were placed in principle above all other tasks. Unfortunately common weal was conceived in a quite peculiar way; in its conception one felt the influence of the preceding historical process under which the socio-political structure of the nation had been formed. Moreover, Catherine herself perhaps exaggerated her dependence on the nobility who had elevated her to the throne and whose support she sought and maintained. For this reason she was bound to regard the problems of popular welfare from the point of view of the nobles, which view she skilfully tried to combine with the theoretical teachings borrowed from the coryphæi of European political thought in the eighteenth century. In the first years of her reign Catherine dreamt somewhat naïvely to establish, in her expres-

sion, the "beatitude" of the people by the aid of a rational legislation. In her summons to the famous Legislative Commission she outlined a programme of an all-embracing national reorganisation along lines chiefly adapted from Montesquieu and Beccaria.

No direct results followed from the work of that Commission which was dissolved one year and a half after its assembling, and Catherine, disappointed in the possibility of promulgating the grand reform in that way, made use of the Commission's discussions that reflected the opinions of various groups of the population, and started on the way of partial solution of separate internal problems. She had endeavoured to establish legal principles in the life of the people, in the relations of the classes to one another and to the Government, and her legislators codified for the first time the principle of personal and property security of the citizens.

Catherine succeeded in carrying through some measures for the protection of public health and for the security of public alimentation. Finally she succeeded in seriously stimulating the work of popular enlightenment and in placing on a firm basis the internal organisation of the classes and the formation of local administrations in the provinces and districts.

The class-unbinding began from the nobility, and owing to the actual prevalence of that class no practical measures were undertaken for the unbinding of the peasants, but on the contrary the legal condition of the peasants on the nobles' estates grew worse, and the bondage-right reached its culminating point. Yet at the same time the abnormality of the bondage system was admitted in principle, and it was then that the idea of serf-liberation began to circulate publicly, not without the influence of the Empress. The abolition of excessive repressions and regulations in regard to commerce and industry, and the granting of civil rights and guarantees to the third estate,

were also ripening during that period. Towards the end of Catherine's reign the status and general tendencies of the further development of the Russian state and people were marked in quite definite features.

CHAPTER II

UNABLE to trace here in detail the development of Russia under Catherine, I shall endeavour only to formulate in brief terms the conditions of the country at the time of Catherine's death, i.e., at the very end of the eighteenth century.

The state boundaries differed from those of the present day only in these instances: of Finland not more than the province of Viborg formed a part of the Russian Empire; the kingdom of Poland proper had not yet belonged to the tzars; Bessarabia was still a Turkish possession; of the Caucasus the province of Stavropol and parts of the districts of Kuban and Terek belonged to Russia; the Central Asiatic possessions and the Amur region were not conquered till far into the nineteenth century. Thus the territory of European Russia included all the ancient Russ-lands for which centuries of struggle had taken place, and its well-protected boundaries expanded northward, westward, and southward to four seas that wash the shores of the Russian plain in Europe.

The international position of Russia was such that not only could no anxiety arise concerning the safety of its frontiers, but, enjoying the status of a great Power and exploiting the weakness of its neighbours, the Empire was able to wield a tremendous influence upon the international relations of the whole civilised world. During the second half of her reign Catherine occupied herself with definite plans for the expulsion of the Turk from Europe and the restoration of the Greek Empire; the imperial crown was to be placed on the head of Catherine's grandson, Constantine.

From the economic viewpoint Catherine's territorial acquisitions had an enormous, one may say a colossal, significance for the future development of Russia. The conquest of black-soil expanses in the south and southwest, and the resultant establishment of perfect safety on the southern frontier and the intensive colonization of those lands, have brought a new factor of great importance into the economic state of the country.

Thenceforward Russia became an agricultural country not only by name, but one of Europe's granaries, in fact. Indeed, already in 1779 the corn export from the chief ports (except those of Ostsee, i.e., the Baltic) exceeded the export of 1776 more than ten times. In spite of the rapid spread of agriculture in the South, the prices on grain remained quite firm, owing to the development of the grain-trade, which circumstance in its turn encouraged further growth of agriculture in the South simultaneously with its increasing colonization.

As to means of communication, of great importance in the eighteenth century had been the waterways, particularly the canals that connected the river-systems, two of which — the Vyshnevolotzk and the Ladoga — had been constructed under Peter. Catherine had considerably improved the Vyshnevolotzk system connecting Volga with the Baltic Sea. Other canals planned and partly opened during her reign, as those of Siask, Novgorod, Beresina, Schluesselburg, the Oginsky, and Maryinsky, were completed under Paul and Alexander in the nineteenth century.[1]

The population, whose decrease was reported after the first census in 1724, grew continually in the second half of the eighteenth century when the strain for territorial struggle had

[1] The adequate work of increasing and improving the water-ways began properly in 1782, when by the advice of Sivers a special body of hydraulicians was established in the department of water-way communications. Cf. the historical sketch of the development of that department for the century (1798–1898) issued in Petrograd by the Ministry of Ways of Communications in 1898.

ceased. In 1763 (the third census) the population of both sexes did not exceed twenty million; at the end of Catherine's reign the same regions had twenty-nine million, and with the newly acquired territories the total population amounted to thirty-six million (according to the figures of Academic Storch). The racial composition of the nation was even then quite varicoloured, if we may judge by the description of Russian nationalities in those days made by a contemporary, Georgy, who gave no numbers, however, nor information about the degree of Russification in one case or another. Certainly the numerical prevalence of Russians, even of the Great Russian tribe, was more decisive at that time than now, for the Empire had not yet absorbed the populations of Poland, the Caucasus, Finland, and Bessarabia. Catherine favoured foreign immigration and encouraged the colonization of New Russia and the Saratov province by Germans and western and southern Slavs. She issued about fifty ukases inviting back Russian fugitives who had fled abroad on account of religious persecutions and other oppressions; on their return and settlement they received considerable privileges.

In regard to the order- and class-composition of the population, we may form some idea from the figures worked out by Academic Storch on the basis of the fourth census, 1783. The male population in Russia, not counting that of the then conquered provinces, amounted to 12,838,529 souls.[2] Of them:

Landowners' private peasants		6,678,239
State-peasants	4,674,603	5,448,259
One-yarders [Free-holders] and freedmen	773,656	
Burghers		293,743
Merchants		107,408
Tax-exempted, i.e., nobles, clergy, and state-officials		310,880
		12,838,529 males.

[2] Till the middle of the nineteenth century the census considered only the male population, since the Government was interested in the num-

Total rural population	12,126,498	or 94.5 per cent.
Total urban population	401,151	or 3.1 per cent.
Total privileged classes	310,880	or 2.4 per cent.

Of the rural population about 45 per cent. were state-peasants and one-yarders (free-holders), and about 55 per cent. landowners' bondage-peasants. The development of the serfdom-institution reached at that time its climax. Legally the serfs had no rights whatever. The landowners concentrated in their hands not only the right to dispense freely with the labour of their bonded-peasants, whom they could transfer from the soil to house-service, could sell singly and with the families, could lend to others into service, whose status they could change, assigning them to factories, etc.; they also had the power to punish them: by putting them into domestic or other prisons, by appointing them to perform some extra work, and by inflicting upon them corporal punishment (rods, whips, knuts) for relatively unimportant transgressions and even just for "insolent" behaviour.

From the time of Empress Elizabeth, landowners were permitted to hand over their "insolent" serfs to the Government for exile to Siberia. As a matter of fact, however terrible that word may sound to us, to many serfs the exile appeared as a liberation from unendurable suffering. But under Catherine the landowners were allowed to exile their serfs to hard-labour prisons as well. The masters had from old days appropriated the right to interfere with the family life of their serfs, to marry them by force, to dispense with their property. Abuses and maltreatment reached unbelievable dimensions. At the same time the serfs were forbidden to complain against their masters, except in cases of state treason. As a matter of fact, the serfs did not quietly accept such a state of affairs, and they reacted to their most heavy oppressions, not only by sending

ber of taxpayers exclusively. We can only approximately construct the total number of the population by multiplying the given figures by two.

complaints to the Government, but also by uprisings, assassinations of landowners and their managers, and by flights. At times, particularly at every accession of a new monarch, rumours circulated among the peasants about fantastic liberation-ukases; then the unrest would embrace considerable territories, and would only be quelled by military repressions, executions, whipping, and exile.

At Catherine's accession about 150,000 peasants took part in disturbances. But the chief elemental and formidable protest against serfdom, which grew to enormous dimensions threatening the existence of the state, burst out in 1773 in the Pugachov-insurrection.

The condition of the serfs depended upon whether they were *barshchina*-peasants or *obrok*-paying peasants. The first had to do obligatory labour for the lord, usually three days in the week. But this custom had not become a law until the time of Paul I, and in some cases the masters exacted from their serfs more than three days labour. Besides the field-work the peasant had to perform various winter services for his owner, and paid natural tribute in the form of fowls, sheep, pigs, berries, and mushrooms, while the women had to bring a certain amount of flax and hemp yarn and texture, and even home-spun cloth.

On the *obrok*-estates the entire plough-land, and at times also the forest, were given over to the peasant community who were obliged to pay a certain amount of money or kind according to the arbitrary will of the owner. The *obrok*-peasants were better off than their *barshchina*-brothers, for, although they had to pay very often exorbitant tribute, they enjoyed a certain degree of freedom and self-government. By the end of the eighteenth century the number of *obrok*-estates had increased in connection with the development of industry and commerce, so that in the northern, not black-soil provinces, they exceeded half of the estates, amounting in the province

of Yaroslavl to 78 per cent., in Nizhni-Novgorod to 82 per cent., in Kostroma to 85 per cent., in Vologda to 83 per cent.; while in the fertile black-soil region their number was very slight and did not exceed 8 per cent. in the governments of Kursk and Tula.

The state-peasants presented a variegated mass. Not less than two-sevenths of them were formerly church-peasants who were secularised and managed by an Economic Collegium, for which reason they had been known as Economical peasants. About one-seventh of the state-peasants constituted the Court-serfs. Catherine had considerably improved their lot by supplanting *barshchina* with *obrok* in the court estates, the payments being made quite moderate; they had another advantage over landowners' peasants in that they could not be sold without their soil. At the beginning of Catherine's reign there were in the northern, central, and eastern provinces over half a million male state-peasants, including the so-called "Tzar's peasants" (about 62,000), who belonged to various members of the Imperial family, and the "Stable peasants," who performed very hard labour for the court stables.

Then followed the groups of the Fiscal peasants, whose labour was exploited for various state needs. There were about 330,000 male persons assigned to factories, state (241,-253) and private (70,965). They were known as "Possessional peasants," and they carried on a vigorous fight for their privileges as compared with the bonded peasants. The factory owners strove to enslave not only the "ascribed" peasants, but even the free, hired labourers. In the same class we must consider the peasants ascribed to the admiralty forests (112,357) and the coachmen (about 50,000) who were settled at important highways for the maintenance of post-stations.

All these groups of Fiscal peasants, though not bonded private slaves in the sense that they could not be sold without

soil, still were state-serfs by the character of their rights and labour.

A greater freedom and independence among the Fiscal peasants was enjoyed by the "black-ploughmen" in the North, who paid the state definite money-*obroks* and taxes, and filled certain natural obligations of a public nature; they had a comparatively broad form of self-government. In the seventies of the eighteenth century there were more than 627,000 such peasants. Another free group of rural population in the South and in some central provinces presented the "Freeholders" and the "Old service serving people," who were not only free from bondage, but at times possessed bonded serfs. They were formed from among the lower ranks of those who had borne frontier service for the Muscovite state and had received in possession small portions of free land. Storch placed their figures, together with the figures of some other free rural groups of an indefinite character, close to 773,656 males at the end of the eighteenth century.

We have already seen that the total number of peasants in the eighteenth century amounted to about 94.5 per cent. of the population. For this reason Russia has of old been known as an exclusively agricultural country. But this definition cannot be accepted without some reserve for the eighteenth century. The fact of the matter is that not all persons classed as peasants were agriculturists. First of all we must exclude not less than 10 per cent. of peasants of the Fiscal groups, who were ascribed to various factories; then the *obrok*-peasants, who formed at least one-half of the landowners,' court-, and Economical peasants, could not be considered as pure agriculturists, since a large part of them, especially in the industrial, not black-soil provinces, did not earn a living from agriculture. Finally various branches of home-industry were considerably developed even among the agricultural population in certain regions. Generally speaking, commerce and small industry had

been very popular in the Muscovite state as well as in Imperial Russia; until the acquisition and settlement of the black-soil South the grain produced in the original Russian provinces was hardly sufficient for the provision of the local population.

The eighteenth century marked a considerable growth of the urban population which had developed rather slowly up to that time. Whereas from 1630 to 1724, i.e., for almost a whole century, the number of city-dwellers increased from 292,000 to 328,000, in the period between 1724 and 1796 the number increased almost four times, reaching 1,301,000. The merchant-class that formed a part of the urban population had also increased, consisting of 240,000 members towards the end of Catherine's reign; their business had grown complex and large in view of the development of industry and foreign trade. In pre-Petrine Russ there hardly existed any factories or big industry; the largest transactions consisted in buying up and reselling the products of small *kustarny*-industry (home work). Under Peter the Government gave a mighty stimulus for the development of factories and mills which were necessary for the production of army and navy equipment. The Government founded factories and assigned to them peasants who became the property of the factory-owners, even if the latter were not of noble origin. (Only nobles were allowed to own serfs.—Tr.) Later the factories, together with the ascribed workingmen established by the Government, were given over to private persons.

Considerable capital accumulated earlier through commerce was attracted by Peter towards manufacturing industry. Although Catherine in her desire to favour the nobility patronised small industry, factories grew rapidly during her reign and made use of free hired workers alongside with the ascribed peasants. The nobles were hostile to this development. It was to their interest to uphold the small peasant industry and commerce which enabled them to draw enormous *obroks* from

their peasants. In the commission appointed by Catherine for the discussion of this question the struggle between the two classes burst forth for the first time. Ultimately the nobles, with the aid of the Empress, prevailed against the merchants. The Government began to observe strictly that the merchants should not possess peasants illegally; while the nobles began to build their own factories based exclusively on bondage-labour.

The number of factories and mills increased from 984 to 3,161 (not counting the mines) under Catherine, according to Tugan-Baranovsky. The figures of Lappo-Danilevsky, on the other hand, show that their number grew from 500 to 2,000 during her reign. At any rate the number of the most important factories and mills increased not less than 40 per cent. The foreign trade was greatly enhanced by the abolition of various limitations and regulations introduced in the first half of the eighteenth century, also by the opening of credit associations, by the development of merchant marines, establishment of consulates abroad, and by the conclusion of foreign trade-agreements. The export grew from thirteen million to fifty-seven million rubles, and the import increased from eight million to thirty-nine million rubles during the reign of Catherine. These facts were largely due to Catherine's first two tariffs, the quite liberal one of 1776, and that of 1782, which was slightly protectionist.

The legal position of the merchants was changed by Catherine who had exempted them from the poll-tax and taxed them instead with 1 per cent. of their capital, the amount of capital to be " conscientiously " declared by the merchants themselves. The merchants valued highly this reform which freed them, as they said, from " a state of slavery." Yet the obligation of performing fiscal duties was not removed from the merchants (except those of the first guild. Russian merchants are to this day classified into three grades or guilds, according

to their wealth and privileges.— Tr.), thus retaining a somewhat subjected character for this class.

The charter granted to cities originated municipal self-government among the urban population. It was divided into six classes, and each sent representatives to the city-*Duma*. Those were:

1. Merchants (of three guilds).
2. *Tzekhs,* i.e., trade groups and artisans.
3. Townspeople.
4. Houseowners.
5. Prominent citizens.
6. Foreign merchants and free artisans.

Catherine's municipal regulations remained in power until the reforms of Alexander II.

The secularisation of the church lands changed the status of the clergy radically. Together with the estates were freed from the power of the bishops more than 30,000 lower clerks who had been bondmen to their superiors. This reform, as Lappo-Danilevsky justly remarks, has deprived the church of its position of an independent corporation within the state; the higher clergy has lost a part of its power and importance, while the lower parish-clergy has been freed from a peculiar bondage.

As I said above, the most conspicuous change under Catherine took place in regard to the legal position of the nobility. Practically, the "unbinding" of the nobles had begun even before her accession, by the ukase of Peter III of February 18, 1762,[3]

[3] Many events in Russian modern history are known by their dates, e.g., the insurrection of December 14 (1825). Since Russia still employs the Julian calendar the dates throughout this book are of the Old Style. The Gregorian calendar is in advance of the Julian 11 days in the eighteenth century, 12 days in the nineteenth, and 13 days in the twentieth century.— Tr.

which released the nobles from obligatory service. The charter granted them in 1785 summarised all their privileges, allowed self-government for the nobility of each province, exempted them from corporal punishment, and gave them the right to bring petitions concerning social questions and needs. The nobles had the exclusive property right to their peopled estates, to the soil, its surface and depth.

The statute about the provinces in 1775 had made the nobles the ruling local class. Thus the nobility, although exempted from obligatory service, still retained the privileges of state-service and the important right of electing provincial officials. After the introduction of the statute more than 10,000 men were elected to provincial and district offices. In this way the landowner, beside being actually an independent monarch on his estate, had acquired after Catherine's reform an enormous socio-political influence on national life through his power of electing officials for important provincial boards and courts.

In order to become an all-powerful political class and influence the fate of the Russian people and state, the nobility needed one more thing — limitation of the monarchical autocracy and their participation in legislation and state administration. This they failed to obtain. Catherine had guarded skilfully and successfully the inviolability of absolutism both from the constitutional aspirations of the nobles, whose typical representative was the famous historian, Prince Shcherbatov, and from the assaults of the aristocracy in the person of Nikita Panin, and, of course, from the "arrogant" ambitions of the constitutionalists-democrats, such as Radishchev.

To summarise all that has been said about the class-composition of the Russian people at the end of the eighteenth century, — we have seen that 94.5 per cent. constituted peasantry, economically a variegated mass and by no means an exclusively agricultural class, while juridically it presented a series of grades and groups, from the totally disabled landowners' bond-

men to the comparatively free groups of the black-ploughmen in the North and the freeholders in the South. Alongside with the latter groups stood the lower ranks of the urban population, about 300,000 male persons, or 2½ per cent. Above them stood the merchants — 107,000 or less than 1 per cent. of the population. Next came the parish-clergy freed from the bishop-bondage by the secularisation act of 1764. The clergy constituted not more than 1 per cent. of the population. Finally, superior to all classes by their privileges and wealth loomed the nobles, numerically not more than 1 per cent. of the population, or 1¼ to 1½ per cent., if we include the personal (not hereditary) noblemen and the officials. This was the one class that had become during the eighteenth century not only completely "unbound," but had acquired important rights and privileges.

It behooves us now to characterise the mental state of the people. In this respect we must bear in mind the division of the nation into the *intelligentzia* and the people, the schism that had begun in Peter's days and still, as a matter of fact, exists at present.

In ancient Russ there was no such division. In Kiev-Russ general culture evidently grew synchronously with material wealth, a culture quite high for those days, though the opinions of the investigators differ on this question. However it might be, that Kiev-Byzantine culture was not handed over to the next epoch, but disappeared almost entirely during the Tartar invasion, the internecine appanage-wars, and other internal troubles.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the Muscovite state had already been formed, ignorance was almost general. In this respect we have authentic information; for instance, the testimony of Gennady, the bishop of Novgorod, about the frequent consecration of illiterates as priests by force of necessity. The Muscovite Government had taken but a few

timid steps toward the education of the people; it feared Western heresies, and its enlightening measures had been paralysed by the reactionary efforts of the obscurantists who reigned supreme, especially at the court of Tzar Feodor. Beginning with Peter the Government undertook some serious measures for spreading education among the people. As I have remarked before, the characteristic peculiarity of Peter's educational measures had been their definitely practical nature: he needed technically educated men to help him in his gigantic struggle, and with this view he established schools. There were opened forty-two "cipher" or primary schools with an attendance of about two thousand pupils of various classes; Peter had no class-scruples when his great task was concerned. According to Miliukov the composition of the pupils was as follows: 45 per cent. children of the clergy; 19.6 per cent. soldiers' children; 18 per cent. children of *prikaz*-clerks, more than 10 per cent. of commoners, 4½ per cent. of towns-people, and only 2½ per cent. from the nobility. In 1716 Peter ordered the nobles to send their children not to the "cipher"-schools but to higher special institutions; in the lower classes of the latter there were many commoners also.

Peter's successors were indifferent to education, and the people were no longer forced to send their children to the "cipher"-schools. In 1732 under Empress Anna the "cipher"-schools were partly supplanted by the so-called Garrison-schools for the regiments; although these schools were organised primarily for soldiers they had nevertheless a general cultural importance.

Under Peter originated also the diocesan schools; in 1727 there were forty-six of them with three thousand pupils. Some of them were soon reorganised into provincial seminaries. In Catherine's time there were eleven thousand students in the diocesan schools and about six thousand in the twenty-six seminaries.

Peter also restored the Moscow theological academy which

was established by Tzar Feodor after the Kiev model with the aid of the two Greeks, the brothers Likhud, and had fallen into decay subsequently by reason of persecution. In restoring it Peter had peculiar purposes, as I have mentioned before: he expected the academy to produce all sorts of specialists, to be a kind of a politechnicum. For the nobility Peter founded the schools of navigation, of engineering, and of artillery. Under Anna to these three schools was added another, the "Szlakhta Corpus," which had become in course of time the highest and most favourite school for children of the nobles. Peter made the first experiment with establishing a university at the Academy of Sciences; he imported professors from abroad, but their number exceeded that of the students, who had to be forcibly recruited from among the academies and seminaries. More successful proved the Gymnasium opened at the Academy: in 1728 it had more than two hundred students, mostly from the commoners.

Such were the main facts of Peter's educational activity. His schools, in spite of their professional character, had a great cultural significance; they were secular, free from the former fear of heresy and novelty, and they brought up and created the first generation of the Russian *intelligentzia.* That *intelligentzia,* having donned European garments, differed from the people no longer in appearance only; it was at that time that the moral schism between the people and the *intelligentzia* began and it has continued to our day. The newly-formed *intelligentzia* produced as early as in the thirties of the eighteenth century a brilliant expounder of new ideas and views in the person of Tatishchev, historian, author, and active administrator. And in the forties began the glorious career of the great Russian scholar and reformer of the Russian language, Lomonosov.

The young *intelligentzia* had feathered quite rapidly. By the middle of the eighteenth century reading of books became

general, particularly of novels, translated in most cases; somewhat later there appeared original novels. Under Elizabeth a European theatre was founded, and later the first literary periodical, *The Monthly Writings,* issued at the Academy of Sciences under the editorship of Mueller. In 1755 began to appear the first private magazine, published by Sumarokov.

Finally, in 1755, Shuvalov founded the university of Moscow with two gymnasia (one for nobles, another for commoners). True, the new university did not become at once the disseminator of education in the country, and in the beginning it appeared to be as much a failure as Peter's university; but Shuvalov did not become discouraged and planned a wide net of schools for a systematic spread of knowledge, at least among the nobility.

With Catherine the work of education received a definite turn. Enlightenment had come to be considered necessary for its own sake, with the aim of ennobling man and developing "good morals," rather than producing useful men for the state. On the other hand the need for education was found equal for all classes. For some time Catherine even advocated the education of women as tantamount in importance to that of men. At the end of her reign Emperor Joseph sent to Russia by her request the experienced pedagogue Yankovich-de Mirievo, a Serb by origin, who introduced the Austrian system of schools. Austrian text-books, considered the last word in pedagogy at that time, were translated and distributed among the teachers of the new schools.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, particularly after the Seven Years' War, the second generation of Russian *intelligentzia* began to manifest an independent striving for education and for working out its own ideology. These strivings were enhanced by the growing contact with Western Europe and the constant influx of Western ideas, through two channels: the ideas of French encyclopedists, materialists, and such thinkers

as Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Mably, on one hand, and the ideas of the German idealists — Masons (the Martinists and Rosenkreizers). They were represented by Novikov and Schwarz who organised the famous "Friendly Society" which rendered great services in the work of disseminating enlightenment and awakening self-consciousness in Russian society.

Catherine had not expected such a rapid and independent development of public opinion; in the early years of her reign she had considered the necessity of cultivating social feelings through literature. With this view she undertook in 1769 the publication of the magazine *Motley*. But this attempt to direct public opinion by the aid of a literary organ had convinced her that the public was far more advanced than she had supposed: *Motley* was forced to resent the attacks of other magazines, which went considerably further and assumed more independence than the Empress desired.

Under Catherine permission was given to establish private printing-houses, and owing to the labours of Novikov and Schwarz the publication of books advanced rapidly. During the eighteenth century there were issued, according to Sipovsky's figures, 9,513 books; of them 6 per cent. in the reign of Peter (i.e., 24 years), 6.7 per cent. during the forty years between Peter and Catherine, 84½ per cent. during the thirty-four years of Catherine's reign, and 2½ per cent. during the four years of Paul's reign. Book-publishing had reached its apogee in the eighties of the eighteenth century, before the crash of Novikov's "Friendly Society" and his other undertakings in the nineties, when Catherine, under the influence of the terrors of the French Revolution, fell into a reactionary mood.[4]

[4] Miliukov distributes Sipovsky's figures in periods of ten and five years:

1698–1710	149 books; yearly,	12 books.
1711–1720	248 books; yearly,	25 books.

The growth of social consciousness manifested itself in the differentiation of public circles; this was conditioned, on one hand, by the difference in the channels through which entered the Western ideas (the materialistic — French, and the idealistic — German), and, on the other hand, by the growing class-consciousness. A by no means negligible rôle was played in this regard by the foreign travels of young nobles, and particularly by their long life abroad during the Seven Years' War.

Thus we see that the development of the Russian *intelligentzia* by the end of the eighteenth century had reached considerable dimensions, if we consider the state of Russian society at the beginning of that century. As to the ideology of the masses, we must analyse it separately in view of the schism which I have already mentioned.

For the first six centuries after the Christianisation of Russia the people were quite indifferent to the teachings of Christianity, and the clergy represented Christian enlightenment only as long as they came from Byzantium. After the transference of the centre from Kiev to the northeast and the subsequent Mongol conquest of Russ, connections with Byzantium weakened and the influx of their priests had ceased; the native Russian clergy gradually descended in their cultural status to the level of the masses, instead of lifting them up.

1721–1725	182	215	yearly, 36 books.
1726–1730	33		yearly, 7 books.
1731–1740	140	books;	yearly, 14 books.
1741–1750	149	books;	yearly, 15 books.
1751–1760	233	books;	yearly, 23 books.
1761–1770	1050	books;	yearly, 105 books.
1771–1775	633	bks.	yearly, 126 books.
1776–1780	833	1466	yearly; 166 books.
1781–1785	986	2685	yearly, 197 books.
1786–1790	1699		yearly, 366 books.
1791–1795	1494	2660	yearly, 299 books.
1796–1800	1166		yearly, 233 books.

In the number 9513 were not included liturgical books, newspapers, and magazines.

In the first six centuries after the conversion Russia had become, to use Miliukov's happy expression, " Holy Russ, the land of numerous churches and incessant chimes, the land of long ' standing ' services, pious prostrations and severe fasts, as it had been pictured by the foreign travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries." In the sixteenth century, and particularly in the seventeenth, there appeared in Russia for the first time a fermentation of ideas, which was caused by the infiltration of certain Western heresies and also by the correction of the liturgical books and ceremonies after the Greek model. This correction of books and customs brought about the Schism which, combined with the bloody disturbances of a socio-political nature that took place at that time, stirred the minds of the masses to such an extent that the Schismatic movement could not only not be eradicated by ruthless persecutions, but on the contrary actually throve because of them.

By Catherine's time the Schismatics had already gone through a period of bloody persecutions; with the new reign began a policy of comparative toleration. This toleration brought about the internal differentiation of the Schismatics into various sects, which process went on alongside with the formation of numerous other religious sects among the people. The latter developed mainly in the nineteenth century, and we shall have to return to this subject later. To estimate the number of Schismatics in the eighteenth century is impossible. Their majority officially figured as Orthodox; many others avoided registration, and the number of Schismatics grew and developed without the knowledge of the Government. In the middle of the nineteenth century the officers of the General Staff published the results of an investigation of the country, in which the official number of Schismatics was declared to be 806,000 as against 56,000,000 of Orthodox; but the same publication explained that the figures did not correspond with the facts,

and that the actual number of Schismatics was not less than 8,000,000, i.e., 15 per cent. of the population. At the end of the eighteenth century the percentage was hardly lower. At any rate we may say that during that epoch whatever was alive and creative in the people went over to the side of the Schism, and if we want to follow up the movement of the nation's thought we shall have to look for it chiefly among the Schismatics, and later among the other sects that had formed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for within the "spiritual fence" of the official church there remained for the most part the passive and indifferent elements of the masses.

I have characterised the position of the population by its classes and the educational stage of the country at the end of the eighteenth century; it remains for me now to examine the position of the sovereign-power on the eve of the nineteenth century. I have pointed out that in the Muscovite state that power had become despotic under the influence of the territorial struggle; true, the character of the supreme power had vacillated more than once even under the Muscovite tzars, especially under the Romanovs who had ascended the throne, not by force of heritage, but by election, after the deliverance of the country from foreign enemies by the aid of the extreme upheaval of the nation's powers. Whenever the finances were in straits the sovereign-power was forced to appeal to the people, by summoning the *zemski sobory* (assemblies of the men of the land). On the other hand, the *boyars* (higher nobility) and the *Boyars' Duma* that had been established in Moscow had attempted to strengthen and broaden their influence on legislation and on the national administration. Those attempts were finally frustrated, and under Peter the autocratic despotism had reached its climax and even received an official theoretic sanction in "The Truth of the Monarchical Will," written by Feofan Prokopovich when Peter ordered him to find reasons

justifying the Tzar's elimination of his son Alexis from the throne succession.[5] This document, based mainly on the theory of the English Monarchist Hobbes, was later incorporated in the Complete Code of Laws, as an act of the Government. Although Peter had always endeavoured to popularise the idea of legality among his subjects and had preferred the collegiate principle to the individualistic, as a guarantee against the wilfulness of the officials, his personal power he considered as absolutely unlimitable.

Under Peter's weak successors there had been more vacillations in the position of the sovereign power, and once, at the accession of Empress Anna Joannovna, the ambitious courtiers almost succeeded in limiting the autocracy in favour of a secret oligarchical council, and later in favour of the Senate. But their effort failed in view of the opposition of the provincial nobles who happened to assemble at that time in Moscow. Upon the request of the provincial nobility Anna Joannovna publicly tore to pieces the limiting " Points," to which she had previously consented.

Catherine believed in the principle of unlimited autocracy, yet she admitted the need of mitigating the despotism of the sovereign authority. Theoretically she tried to distinguish between a just monarchy and a despoty; in practice she alleviated the governmental cruelties that had been customary, especially under Peter, and mitigated judicial penalties. She advocated autocracy as an indispensable form of government in the vast Russian Empire composed of variegated parts. It is curious to note that she instructed her grandson Alexander with the help of the Republican La Harpe in principles of liberalism and conscious acknowledgement of the rights of man and citizen.

[5] The reader will find a powerful treatment of this incident and of that epoch in general in Merezhkovsky's novel " The Anti-Christ or Peter and Alexis." Merezhkovsky's fiction is of great historical value, based as it is on original documents.— Tr.

As to the administrative organs, the old Muscovite local units that were formed for lack of a powerful central authority began to decay at the very beginning of the eighteenth century. Peter's impetuous policy dealt the old organs a death blow before, occupied as he had been with foreign wars and travels, he could supplant them with new ones. In 1711, leaving for the war with Turkey, he hastily organised the Senate, which was to act in the place of the absent Monarch in internal affairs. Since those absences were frequent and lengthy the authority of the Senate was considerable.

When the war cares had somewhat diminished there came to the front the question of conserving and maintaining the army. As a result of this exigency it was quartered throughout the country which was for this purpose divided into eight *gubernii* or provinces. The entire provincial administration was adapted to the satisfaction of a single need — the maintenance of the army.

For several years there were no intermediary departments between the Senate and the provincial administration. In 1715 Peter, somewhat released from cares of war, betook himself to carry out internal reforms. Instead of the decayed *prikazy* (boards) he established after the Swedish model *collegia,* which corresponded to the present ministries with the difference that in the Collegium the power was not in the hand of a single minister, but in the hands of from three to twelve persons. There were nine, and later twelve Collegia; at first they were subjected to the supervision of the Senate.

Under Peter's successors the position of the Senate as the highest administrative organ had changed: though the Senate was not abolished, it became subservient to the Supreme Secret Council, and later to the Cabinet (under Anna) — institutions composed of favourites and temporary rulers who used their personal influence to rise above the Senate. Then, beside these casual institutions, some Collegia — the Military, the Naval,

the Foreign — were exempted from subjection to the Senate and placed on the same level with it.

Elizabeth had partly rehabilitated the Senate, but the three above-mentioned Collegia remained independent. Owing to Elizabeth's dislike for tedious state affairs the Senate assumed during her reign even more authority than under Peter.

At her accession Catherine, imbued with the philosophical tendencies of the "enlightenment epoch," intended to grant Russia an ideal, rational legislation. With this aim she summoned the Code Commission. She soon grew disappointed in her hope of reorganising at once the legislation, and she started out on a gradual reform of the administration from below, guided by the complaints against provincial disorders, which had been discussed by the Code Commission. As a result she worked out an adequate plan of the province-reform. She had transferred to the local administration a considerable part of the power that had been in the hands of the central Collegia. There were established local Fiscal Chambers as branches of the Chamber-Collegium (corresponding to the present Ministry of Finance). Then all Collegia, except the first three, were dismissed, and all local administrative and financial management passed into the hands of the Fiscal Chambers; all police powers were concentrated in the Provincial Boards; care for public health and general safety was in the hands of Provincial Boards of Public Safety, but the latter received no appropriations, and their activity remained only on paper. All the power in the new institutions fell into the hands of the provincial nobility, who had been granted the right to elect the officials, while these were elected mainly from among the nobility themselves.

Having reformed the provinces Catherine did not succeed, however, in adequately reorganising the central institutions. The abolished Collegia were not succeeded by anything permanent. The Senate appeared again to be the single supervising and administering body; but in reality the only power was in the

hand of the Procurator-General of the Senate, who had the right to report personally to the Empress on all the questions that came before the Senate. He played the part of a prime-minister and minister of justice (to this day the Minister of Justice is at the same time the Procurator-General) and minister of finance combined. The position of the Senate was deplorable. Beside the Procurator-General Catherine intrusted with important functions various individuals, her favourites, or some persons who had won her confidence. Such a state of affairs, the absence of a definite central power, and the cupidity and insolence of the favourites, had led to flagrant abuses, sheer robbery and spoliation of the State treasury on a gigantic scale. Besides, the country remained without any code of laws, since Catherine had not carried through her original intention of granting a "rational" legislation; judges and administrators used their own discretion in choosing for their decisions some legal basis out of the mass of laws, ukases, and decrees that filled the bureaucratic archives. It can be easily understood what a broad field for abuse such conditions offered. The question of codification passed into the nineteenth century.

Concerning the finances in the eighteenth century we may say that in general the means of the Government were extremely meagre. I have already pointed out how Peter had to scheme. During his reign the disproportion between the growing requirements of the State and the paying capacity of the nation had completely drained the land, and considerably decreased the population.

In the meantime the budget grew with unbelievable rapidity. Before the accession of Peter, in 1680, the expenses of the State did not exceed one million and a half rubles (one must remember that the ruble was worth fifteen to seventeen times more than at present); in 1724 they were eight and a half million rubles (the ruble equal to our nine to ten rubles), consequently in forty-four years the nominal budget had increased six-fold.

Even if we should take into account the fall in the value of the ruble for that period and translate both budgets in our money, there will still be an increase of the budget about three and a half times.[6]

Under Peter's immediate successors, in spite of the court's profligacy and its desire to spend without limit, the budget did not increase very much because there were no draining wars. During those forty years (from Peter to Catherine) it only doubled.

Upon her accession Catherine found the finances terribly entangled. At that time the Seven Years' War was taking place, in which Russia, for some unknown purpose, participated; the soldiers had not received pay for a whole year. When the Empress appeared before the Senate she was informed that there was need for the immediate expenditure of fifteen million rubles, but that the Treasury was empty. Catherine made skilful use of the exigency and demonstrated her magnanimity in the opportune moment by granting immediately a considerable sum of money from the Imperial Private Cabinet for the state needs; whereby she at once gained popularity.

Then she carried out a very happy reform — the lowering of the salt-tax; in order to acquire national sympathy which

[6] In comparing the financial budgets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries one must bear in mind the change in the purchasing power of the silver ruble and later of the surrogates (copper coins under Peter, assignations under Catherine). From the beginning of the sixteenth century down to our time the value of the ruble has almost steadily fallen for two reasons: the cheapening of silver (ab. 15–18 times), and the decrease in the weight of the coin (7 times). The silver ruble of the fifteenth century was equivalent to our 100–130 rubles, toward the end of the sixteenth century it fell to 24–25 of our present rubles; at the beginning of the seventeenth century, to 12, but at the end of that century it rose to 17 rubles; under Peter it fell to 9, and toward the end of Catherine's reign to 5 present rubles. Regardless of this, the course of the copper money and of the assignations had been fluctuating in its turn, depending on the size of the issue and the general trade-conjunctures.

she needed badly in her abnormal position, Catherine decided to cut down considerably that most exasperating tax, at the same time assigning 300,000 rubles from her Cabinet-money to cover the possible deficit. But the lowering of the tax brought an increase in consumption (especially for fisheries), and as a result the income of the fiscal salt monopoly even increased.

But despite her first successful steps Catherine had after all not introduced a regulated financial system; the financial conditions remained almost as deplorable as before. True there was not such a strain on the nation's strength as under Peter, and the country's industry grew fast and profitable owing to the economic advantages of the conquered territories. In emergency cases when large expenditures appeared necessary (beginning with the first Turkish war), Catherine made use of the Assignational bank, founded before her accession. No foreign loans had existed yet. During the Seven Years' War Elizabeth attempted to transact a foreign loan of only two million rubles, but her attempt suffered a complete fiasco. By the aid of the Assignational bank Catherine had received a means for making quite large internal loans. At first this operation proved successful. In 1769 there were issued assignations for 17,841,000 rubles, and their course remained at par, i.e., the paper-ruble was equivalent to the silver one. The subsequent loans, comparatively small in size, also passed fairly well. Even when after the declaration of the second Turkish war there was issued a loan for 53,000,000 rubles, almost equal to the then yearly budget, the course of the assignations did not fall in a marked way; the total amount of assignations at that time had reached one hundred million rubles at the course of ninety-seven silver kopecks for one assignation-ruble. But the next issues caused a growing fall of the course. During the whole reign of Catherine assignations were issued for one hundred and fifty-seven million rubles, and at the end the course had fallen below seventy kopecks. Such a state of affairs threatened the State

with bankruptcy in the future. At the same time expenses continued to grow with great rapidity. During her reign the state expenditures had increased (nominally) five-fold; at her accession they equalled sixteen and a half million; at her death — seventy-eight million.

This financial situation was made worse by the terrible thievery of the higher officials, which aroused a cry of despair in the letter of the young Grand Duke (later Emperor) Alexander to La Harpe: "What takes place is beyond conception; all rob, you can hardly meet an honest person."

We may make a résumé of all that we have said about the position of Russia at the end of Catherine's reign in the following fundamental points:

1. On the eve of the nineteenth century Russia presented a powerful state united by a single strong authority on an enormous and definite territory, with firm and safe borders, containing a population of thirty-six million. This population, though composed of various races, was dominated by the prevalence of the Russian nationality.

2. In regard to the class-composition of that political organism, its differentiation into separate fixed or "bound" classes and orders had come to an end at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as a result of a long process. Under the influence of new national conditions, and mainly because of the cessation of the former territorial struggle, the higher classes had begun to "unbind," while the liberation of the lower strata, the peasantry, had come to be considered, at least in principle, as a question to be solved in the more or less near future.

3. Mentally the population was divided at the beginning of the eighteenth century into the *intelligentzia* and the masses. Among the latter arose a strong fermentation of ideas, caused by the stirring effect of the Schism. The *intelligentzia* had been from the very start a body consisting if not of all classes, at least of various orders and classes, and it appeared as the most

active, progressive, and conscious element in the state; ideas of limiting the autocratic power and of demanding greater freedom had already begun to develop among that body in the fifteenth century.

4. About that time began to appear some elements of the future capitalism — the centralisation of the merchants' capital and the first experiments in its application to big industry; then also originated the struggle between the interests of the land-owning class of nobles and the representatives of the commercial-industrial capital.

5. The supreme power remained autocratic, but the autocracy was manifested in milder forms. As to the administration itself Catherine had succeeded in organising the local provincial governments quite firmly along lines rather rational for those days, but she had not reorganised the central Government, and by the end of her reign there was complete chaos in the central management of the state affairs.

A weak place in the organisation of the Russian state was its financial system and the national economy in general.

CHAPTER III

ON the border-line between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took place the four years' reign of Paul I. This period, until recently under the seal of censorship, has always aroused public curiosity, as something mysterious and forbidden, while the attention of historians, psychologists, biographers, dramatists, and novelists has naturally been attracted by the original personality of the crowned psychopath and by the exceptional circumstances under which his drama was enacted and ended so tragically.

From the point of view of our attitude towards historical events, this reign has but a secondary importance. Though it lies between two centuries and separates the " age of Catherine " from the " age of Alexander," it can by no means be considered as a transitional period. On the contrary, in the historical process of the development of the Russian people, which interests us, that reign appears as a sudden intrusion, as an unexpected squall that, coming from the outside, confused everything, caused a temporary topsy-turvy in the national life, but which could not have interrupted for long or radically changed the natural course of the functioning process. In view of this nature of Paul's reign, Alexander upon his accession had nothing else to do but erase everything committed by his father, and having healed the not deep, but painful wounds inflicted by him upon the state-organism, to proceed further from the point at which Catherine's age-weakened and shaky hand had stopped.

For us the reign of Paul is interesting not on account of its tragi-comic phenomena, but because of the changes that took place in the position of the people during that time, and the

mental movement among the public aroused by the governmental terror. Still more important for us are the international relations conditioned, on one hand, by Paul's idiosyncrasies, and on the other, by the great events that had taken place in Western Europe.

I do not intend therefore to give here a detailed biography of Paul; those interested in it will turn to Schilder's great work, or to the brief compilation of that work, issued by Shumigorsky. For our purposes proper the following brief biographical facts will suffice. Paul was born in 1754, eight years before Catherine's accession. His childhood passed under most abnormal conditions: Empress Elizabeth took him away from his parents immediately after his birth, and placed him into an unhealthy, hot-house atmosphere of a variety of nurses and governesses. Later he fell under the care of Count Nikita Panin, a man of great distinction for that time. He was a wise statesman, but not a conscientious pedagogue, and did not pay sufficient attention to his task.

Catherine had no confidence in Panin, but she feared to dismiss him in view of the rumours that she intended to remove Paul altogether, and she yielded to the public opinion that Paul would be safe as long as he remained under Panin's care. The grown-up Paul inspired no affection in Catherine; she did not admit him to state affairs, and even removed him from the military department for which he felt a special inclination. Paul's first marriage was unhappy and of short duration; his wife, who died during her confinement, aggravated still more the tense relations between Paul and his mother. When he married for the second time, Catherine assigned the new couple Gatchina where they were to lead a private life. Their children Catherine treated as Elizabeth had treated hers, i.e., she took them from their parents immediately after their birth and educated them herself. Paul's removal from state affairs, and his impertinent treatment by the favourites of the Em-

press, especially by Potiomkin, poured oil on the fire and aroused in Paul hatred for all the court of Catherine. For thirty years he waited impatiently for the moment when he would begin to reign and exercise his own power.

We must add that towards the end of Catherine's reign Paul began to suspect that his mother would deprive him of the throne, and we know that such a plan had indeed been considered but failed of realisation only because Alexander refused to ascend the throne before his father, thus frustrating Catherine's intentions.

On his accession Paul gave vent to the hatred that had accumulated in his mind against all his mother's acts. Having no definite plan of action and not even a clear conception of state matters and needs, Paul began to set aside indiscriminately whatever his mother had enacted. In some respects he restored old forms. For instance he reinstalled some Collegia, but gave them no proper authority, while their old authority had passed over to the Fiscal Boards. He had invented a plan for the reorganisation of the entire central administration; but in fact the plan consisted in the abolishment of all state institutions and the concentration of the whole administration in the hands of the Tzar — an unrealisable plan. His particular effort was expressed in the abolition of all the rights and privileges granted by Catherine to certain classes. Thus he withdrew the charters given to cities and to the nobility, and not only abolished the rights of the nobles for offering petitions concerning their needs, but even set aside the exemption of the nobles from corporal punishment by court decisions.[1]

There exists a view that Paul, negatively inclined towards

[1] Let us remark that there were some just revocations of Catherine's measures under Paul. Such were: The liberation of Novikov from Schluesselburg, the recall of Radishchev from his exile, and the solemn release with special honours of Kosciusco and the other captive Poles who had been kept in Petrograd.

privileges for the upper classes, favoured the liberation of the people from the oppression of the landowners. He might have had some good intentions, but we can hardly ascribe to him any seriously thought out system in this regard. In support of that proposition one usually brings forward the Manifesto of April 5, 1797, which established Sunday rest and three days-*barshchina;* but the Manifesto is not quite correctly interpreted. Only holiday-work for the landowner was categorically forbidden, and there was an additional " supposition " that three days-*barshchina* might be sufficient for the upkeep of the landowner's estate. The very form of expressing that desideratum, in the absence of any sanction, shows that there was no law establishing a three days-*barshchina,* although later it came to be so interpreted. Furthermore one must mention that in Little Russia, for instance, the three days-*barshchina* was not favourable for the peasants, since there had prevailed a custom for two days-*barshchina.* Another law issued by Paul upon the request of Bezborodko, prohibiting the sale of bondsmen without soil, affected only Little Russia (Bezborodko's birth-place. Tr.).

Paul's attitude towards peasant-disturbances and their complaints against oppressions by their landowners, is quite characteristic. At his accession there burst out disturbances in thirty-two provinces. Paul sent for their suppression enormous regiments under the command of Fieldmarshal-General Prince Riepnin, who rapidly quelled the unrest by the employment of ruthless means. At the suppression of twelve thousand peasants of the landowners Apraksin and Prince Golitzin in the province of Oriol, a regular battle took place, in which the peasants lost twenty dead and about seventy wounded. Riepnin ordered the dead peasants buried outside of the cemetery fence and put an epitaph over their grave: " Here lie criminals before the Lord, the Tzar, and the landowners, justly punished according to God's law." The houses of those peasants were destroyed and levelled with the ground. Paul not only approved of these

measures, but issued a special manifesto on January 29, 1797, in which he threatened with similar punishments all peasants who would not strictly obey their masters.

In another instance certain house-serfs in Petrograd had attempted to complain before Paul of their cruel oppression. Without investigating the case, Paul ordered the peasants led out on the public square and flogged with the knut " as much as their owners will desire."

Thus Paul was hardly guilty of a serious effort to improve the condition of the peasants. He considered the landowners as gratis-police-chiefs, and deemed the peace of the country secure as long as Russia had 100,000 such police-chiefs. He was not averse to increasing that number, granting Fiscal peasants to private persons with a generous hand: in four years he gave away 530,000 Fiscal peasants of both sexes to various landowners and officials, earnestly arguing that he did so for the good of the peasants, and for the improvement of their lot, which was not true. Consider that Catherine, who had lavishly rewarded her favourites and other persons with peasants, gave out in all 800,000 peasants, while Paul distributed in four years 530,000.

Of all classes the clergy had most reasons to be satisfied with Paul, who as a religious person and as one who assumed to be the head of the Church, cared for the welfare of the clergy; but even in that case the results were at times strange. Some of his cares had an ambiguous character, so that the Metropolitan Platon, Paul's early religious instructor and greatly respected friend, was forced to join those who protested against certain of his measures. The protest concerned the introduction of a queer novelty — the bestowing of orders upon the clergy. Platon thought that from the canonic point of view the rewarding of church-ministers by lay authorities was not to be allowed. The Metropolitan besought Paul on his knees not to honour him with the order of Andrey the First Called, but finally he had to submit and accept it. This incident may appear unimportant in itself,

but it is characteristic of the attitude of Paul towards the class which he had particularly respected.

Of a greater, positive importance was Paul's relation to religious schools, for which he did a good deal; he appropriated for them a considerable sum of money from the income of the secularised church-estates. Here we should note also Paul's tolerant attitude towards non-Orthodox and even non-Christian churches, especially his favourable relation towards Catholicism. The reason lies perhaps in his personal religiousness and high estimate of clerical duties; as to the Catholic church, there Paul's place in the Order of the Knights of Malta played an important rôle. He not only accepted the supreme protectorate of that order, but even permitted a special priorate of it to open in Petrograd. This circumstance, which was due to the Tzar's quaint fantasies, had very important consequences on the course of international relations, as we shall see later.

Another prominent fact in the sphere of church affairs under Paul was his rather tolerant attitude towards the Schismatics. In this respect he followed the policy of Catherine, the traces of whose reign he had so energetically tried to destroy with all his other measures. Upon the request of Platon the Tzar consented to take an important step, namely to permit public worship to those old believers who did not belong to the so called pernicious sects, who were thus for the first time equalised with other non-Orthodox creeds.

As to Paul's treatment of secular education, his activity in that direction was most reactionary, one may say destructive. Even at the end of Catherine's reign private printing-houses were forbidden, so that the publishing of books had greatly decreased; but under Paul, particularly in his last two years, the number of published books was reduced to a negligible quantity, while the nature of the books had also changed — there were issued exclusively books for schools or of some practical contents.[3] The

[2] The first volume of Storch's work, *Gemaelde des Russischen*

import of books published abroad was entirely prohibited at the end of his reign, and from the year 1800 everything printed abroad, regardless of contents, even music-notes, had no access into Russia.

Of still greater importance was another measure — the recall of Russian students from foreign universities (there were 65 in Jena, and 36 in Leipzig), and the forbidding of Russian youths to go abroad for educational purposes.

In his hatred for revolutionary ideas and for liberalism in general, Paul persecuted with the stubbornness of a maniac every manifestation of free tendencies. Hence his war against round hats and top-boots which had been worn in France, against frock-coats and tricoloured ribbons. For these crimes peaceful citizens were severely persecuted, officials were dismissed, private persons were arrested, many were exiled from the capital. Similar punishments were inflicted upon those who failed to observe the prescribed etiquette upon meeting the Tzar (at the sight of the Imperial carriage passers-by were required to stop and remain on their knees until the Despot had passed them. Tr.) In view of that etiquette the people considered a meeting with the Tzar as a great calamity; at the sight of his approach they tried to hide themselves in courtyards, behind fences, and so forth. The number of persons exiled and imprisoned for utter trivialities reached thousands, and there were 15,000 (or more than 12,000, according to other sources) such persons rehabilitated by Alexander upon his accession.

The yoke of Paul's régime was felt most heavily by the army, from the orderlies to the generals. Endless mustering, severe penalties for the slightest fault in the front-line, senseless ways of instruction, most uncomfortable uniforms, which proved par-

Reichs, appeared in Riga in 1797, while the other volumes had to be printed abroad; yet Storch was a *persona grata* at the court — he occupied the position of personal reader to the Empress Maria Feodorovna, and had his first volume dedicated to Paul.

ticularly annoying during the marching, which was required to be of almost as high a standard as the art of ballet; finally the compulsory wearing of locks and braids that were smeared with lard and powdered with flour or brick-dust — all these complicated the difficulty of military service which lasted at that time twenty-five years. The officers and generals had to fear for their fate hourly, since the slightest imperfection of any of their subordinates might provoke the most cruel consequences, in case the Emperor was in bad humour. (Paul was a devout worshipper of the Prussian system of militarism. Tr.)

Such were some of the terrors of Paul's régime. It is interesting to read the opinion of the staunch conservative and advocate of autocracy, N. M. Karamzin, in his "Paper on Ancient and Modern Russia," which he presented in 1811 to Alexander I as an argument against the projected liberal reforms. Though antagonistic to the liberal Emperor, he thus characterised the reign of Paul: "Paul ascended the throne at a time very favourable for autocracy, when the terrors of the French Revolution had cured Europe of the dreams about civil liberty and equality; but what the Jacobines had done for the republic Paul did for the autocracy: he forced hatred against its abuses. In his miserable fallacy of mind, and because of his numerous personal bitter experiences he wished to be an Ivan IV (The Terrible. Tr.); but the Russians had already had Catherine II, had known that the monarch not less than the subjects was bound to fulfil his sacred duties, the neglecting of which destroys the ancient covenant between rule and obedience and hurls the people from the heights of civilism into the chaos of individual natural rights. The son of Catherine could have both remained a strict monarch and deserved the gratitude of his country; but to the great astonishment of the Russians he began to dominate by force of general terror (ising?), following no statutes save his own whims; he considered us not as subjects, but as slaves; executed for no guilt, rewarded for no merits, deprived punishment of shame, reward —

of its glory, humiliated ranks and ribbons by lavishing them without limit; he frivolously destroyed results of years-long state-wisdom out of hatred for his mother's enactments; he killed in our army the heroic spirit cultivated by Catherine, and supplanted it with corporalship. The heroes who had been accustomed to victories, he taught how to march; reverted the nobility from military service; while despising the soul, he respected caps and collars; although of a natural human inclination to do good, he nourished himself on the gall of evil: day after day he invented means for terrifying people, and was himself afraid most of all; he had intended to erect for himself an inaccessible palace — and erected a tomb . . . Let us note," Karamzin added, " a curious feature: in the opinion of foreigners the Russians were afraid even to think during that reign of terror; nay! they spoke openly, became silent only out of ennui and frequent repetition, confided in one another and were not deceived. A spirit of sincere brotherhood reigned in the capitals; the common misfortune had united all hearts, and the magnanimous indignation against the abuses of the Crown had drowned the voice of personal safety." Analogous information may be found in the writings of Wiegel and Grech, also avowed conservatives.

We must, however, say that the " magnanimous indignation " was not expressed in any action. The public had not even tried to demonstrate its attitude towards Paul through some general protest; it hated in silence, but that general mood gave the few conspirators of the coup d'état of March 11, 1801, sufficient encouragement for the removal of Paul.

The economic condition of the country could not have altered considerably under Paul, in view of the brief duration of his reign; as to the financial position of Russia, it had depended largely upon his foreign policy and the whimsical changes that had taken place in it during his time. Paul began with a conclusion of peace with Persia and the revocation of the recruitment-conscription decreed by Catherine; he declined to send

an army of forty thousand men against the French republic, to which Catherine had consented owing to the pleadings of the British ambassador, Witworth, and recalled the Russian vessels that had been sent to help the English fleet. Then he started on the extinguishing of the Assignational loan. The Government decided to withdraw a portion of the issued assignations; in the presence of Paul there took place a solemn burning of assignations for the sum of six million rubles. Thus the total amount of issued assignations fell from 157 million to 151 million, i.e., a decrease of less than 4 per cent., but even that slight difference was significant as indicating the Government's intention to pay debts rather than accumulate them. At the same time steps were taken for the strengthening of the course of the silver money; a permanent weight of the silver ruble was established, to be equivalent to the weight of four francs. Then of great importance was the restoration of the liberal custom-tariff of 1782, a measure taken by Paul not because of his belief in free trade but from his desire to annul the tariff introduced by Catherine in 1793.

The new tariff helped to develop national trade. For big industry a great service was played by the discovery of coal in the basin of the Donietz. This discovery, made in southern Russia, a region poor in forests, immediately influenced the conditions of industry in the New-Russia district. Of great significance for the growth of internal trade relations and for the transportation of certain products to ports was the opening of new canals under Paul; some of them had been begun under Catherine. The Oginsky Canal connecting the basin of the Dnieper with the river Niemen was begun in 1797 and finished in the same reign; a canal was dug (by Sivers) around lake Ilmen; one of the lake Ladoga canals, the Siassky, was started; the works for the Maryinsky canal were continued. Under Paul was also established a free-port system in the Crimea, which proved an enlivening stimulus for the South.

But the improvement of economic conditions in the country did not endure long, and the national finances soon experienced new vacillations. In 1798 the peaceful course of events was suddenly interrupted. At that time Napoleon Bonaparte on his way to Egypt captured the island of Malta. The island had an impregnable fortress, but the Grand Master of the Order for some unknown reason (treason was even suspected) surrendered it without battle, removed the archives and treasures and departed for Venice. The Petrograd priorate declared him deposed, and some time after, to the general astonishment, Paul, the head of the Orthodox church, accepted the title of Grand Master of that Catholic order, subject to the Pope. There exists a theory that in Paul's mind that strange step was connected with a fantastic undertaking — the ubiquitous eradication of revolutions by way of uniting all the nobles of the world under the Maltian order. Whether this was so, is hard to say; but certainly the idea was not realised. Having declared war against France, and being unwilling to fight single-handed, Paul assisted Pitt in creating a strong coalition against the Republic. He entered into an alliance with Austria and England, then into the coalition came the Sardinian kingdom and even Turkey, which had suffered from Napoleon's invasion into Syria. Following the counsel of the emperor of Austria, Paul appointed Suvorov commander of the allied armies of Russia and Austria. Suvorov had been under ban, and stayed in his estate surveyed by the police; he disliked Paul's military changes, and had let him feel it through masqued jokes and frolics, for which he paid with disgrace and exile. But now Paul appealed to Suvorov in his own name and in the name of the emperor of Austria. Suvorov accepted the commandership with joy. His campaign was signified by brilliant victories over the French in Northern Italy and by the famous crossing of the Alps. But when Northern Italy had been cleared of the French Austria was satisfied and refused to support Suvorov in his further plans.

Suvorov was unable to carry through his plan of proceeding to Paris. This "Austrian treachery" caused the defeat of General Rimsky-Korsakov's regiment by the French. Paul was infuriated and recalled his army, thus bringing to an end the war with France. At the same time the Russian corps sent to Holland against the French was not adequately supported by the British, who failed, besides, to keep the agreement about paying proper wages to the soldiers; again Paul was indignant.

In the meantime Napoleon returned from Egypt to carry out his first coup d'état: on Brumaire 18 he overthrew the Directory, and became First Consul, actually the lord of France. Seeing that things were leading to the restoration of the monarchy, even if by the "usurper," Paul changed his attitude towards France, expecting Napoleon to do away with the last vestiges of the revolution. Napoleon, in his turn, skilfully flattered him by releasing and sending back with gifts the Russian prisoners, without any demand of exchange. This impressed the knight-spirit in Paul, and in the hope of gaining Napoleon's co-operation in other questions, he entered with him into a discussion of terms of peace and of an alliance against England, whom he held responsible for the defeat of his army in Holland. It was not difficult for Napoleon to array Paul against the English, for about that time the latter had taken Malta from the French, and did not give it back to the Order.

Immediately, ignoring all international treaties, Paul placed an embargo on all the English merchant-vessels, put through radical changes in the customs-tariff, and finally forbade altogether the export and import of goods to and from England and Prussia, which was then on the side of the British. By these measures directed against the English Paul shook the entire Russian trade. Not satisfied with the custom repressions Paul ordered arrested all English goods in the stores. Evidently encouraged by Napoleon, Paul decided to strike England on its sore spot: he determined to conquer India, a task that seemed

quite easy to him. Forty regiments of Don-Cossacks went to take India, equipped with double sets of horses, but without provender, with no good maps and with impassable steppes to pass through. The army was naturally doomed to perish. The folly of that act appeared so obvious to his contemporaries that the Princess Lieven, wife of the Tzar's closest adjutant-general, stated in her memoirs that Paul undertook the plan in order to abolish deliberately the Cossack army, which he suspected of excessive love for freedom. The suggestion was not true, of course, but it shows the sort of intentions ascribed to Paul by his entourage. Happily that march began two months before Paul's death and Alexander hastened on the very night of the overthrow to send a courier for the return of the unlucky Cossacks; it was found that they had not yet reached the frontier, but had already lost half of their horses. . . .

This fact illustrates Paul's madness and the horrible consequences which his measures could have had. The finances were naturally painfully affected by his campaigns and expeditions. We have seen him burning six millions' worth of assignations early in his reign, but his wars required extra expenses, and he was forced to issue assignations again, since there was no other source for money. By the end of his reign their sum rose from 151 to 212 millions, which definitely devalued the paper-ruble. Such were the results of Paul's international policy.

In summarising Paul's reign we see that the territorial boundaries remained intact. The tzar of Gruzia, pressed by Persia, declared in January, 1801, his desire to become a Russian subject; but the formal annexation of Gruzia took place under Alexander.

As to the condition of the people, Paul's measures, however pernicious they had been, could not cause any profound effects in four years. The most disastrous change in the peasant-life was the transference from the state-class into private bondage of 530,000 persons distributed by Paul among private citizens.

In the realm of commerce and industry, despite the numerous favourable conditions at the beginning of the reign, towards the end the foreign trade was annihilated, and the internal trade in the most chaotic state. A still greater chaos reigned in the national and provincial administration.

Such was the situation of Russia when Paul ceased to exist.[3]

[3] The personality of the half-demented Tzar and the circumstances of his assassination are vividly and truthfully pictured by Merezhkovsky in his play, "Paul I."—Tr.

CHAPTER IV

WITH March 12, 1801, begins the history of Russia in the nineteenth century. I deem it not useless to cast a preliminary view at its contents, and to say a few words about its possible division into periods. At this I recall the words which I heard twenty-five years ago in a lecture by Professor V. I. Sergeyevich: "If history has to do with the developmental laws of human societies, then its division into periods reflecting the consequentiality of that development has an essential significance: in the division of history into periods is its whole sense, the entire philosophy of its course and changes."

It is clear from my preceding exposition that I share this view on the rôle of the periodical division of history. I have characterised the first long period of Russian history, and have pointed out the advent of a new period under Catherine and those changes which accompanied the process that formed the contents of the history of Russia in the nineteenth century. This new period, of the nineteenth century, may in its turn be divided into two large parts. The process of the "unbinding" of all classes and the mitigation of the autocratic despotism has been carried on by the way of inter-class struggle and by the way of a struggle between the Government and the most conscious and progressive representatives of the public. The course and outcome of that struggle were influenced by internal as well as by foreign events taking place during that time; all these phenomena and facts compose the subject of this book. If we shall bear in mind only the most general course of the historical process in the development of which those phenomena took place,

we may point out from the outset the two epochs into which the process is naturally divided by the chief event of internal Russian history in the nineteenth century — the abolition of serfdom.

From this point of view to the first period of the nineteenth century belong the reigns of Alexander I and Nicholas I, characterised by preparations for the fall of bondage — the event that has served as a starting point for the liberation of the whole population. To the next period we must assign the following four decades of the nineteenth century, when the results of the abolition of serfdom had developed the further process of the substitution by a constitutional of the autocratic state.

These are the two main stages in the history of the last century, but in the detailed study of the events and facts that have taken place in the course of the process we shall have to observe considerably more stages and periodical subdivisions.

In Russia only the first years of the nineteenth century passed peacefully; the external peace and the progressive tendencies of the Government helped the regular course of the internal life and the calm evolution of the historical process for which preceding history had prepared. Then the general course of events in Western Europe, which had grown very stormy and threatened to engulf the whole universe into its whirlpool, had influenced resolutely the tempo and direction of Russian affairs. It had influenced the tendency of the Russian Government and the change in the nature of its task; the participation in the universal struggle had checked the peaceful trend of evolution, but it had also accelerated the tempo of events, quickening the beat of the pulse in the national organism and drawing Russia resolutely into the sphere of European social life. The reign of Alexander was full of great events, and the progress of Russian life went on rapidly and turbulently under external shocks, but with marked vacillations, making, so to say, considerable zigzags. These zigzags are the fractional periods or stages into which the

reign of Alexander must be divided. I count six such stages in the first quarter of the last century.

The first stage of Alexander's reign — 1801–1805 — is characterised by the Emperor's ardent and sincere reformatory activity, taken up on his own initiative — the period of most rosy though indefinite expectations on the part of the people. The next two years (1805–1807) stand sharply apart: they are the years of the first wars with Napoleon, wars that were carried on without any visible relation to Russian interests, heavily impressed the position of the people, and temporarily interrupted the reforms of the Government.

The third period (1808–1811) is marked by Alexander's alliance with Napoleon, and in connection with this, by the Continental System which had an enormous significance, disastrous for Russian trade, and provoked the first friction between the Government and the people. At the same time those four years saw the second attempt to introduce reforms, less ardent and important, but undertaken in connection with the public dissatisfaction, and therefore symptomatic. Society began to regard Alexander's policy consciously and critically.

Then followed the fourth period (1812–1815), when not only the Government but the whole country took part in the greatest universal events of that time.

The fifth period (1816–1820) passed for Alexander largely in international congresses, and for the public in expectation of reforms and reorganisations which they regarded more consciously, putting forth definite demands, but still not breaking completely with the Government and not losing hope for its reformatory activity.

The sixth period (1821–1825) was quite definitely reactionary in the ruling spheres, showed despair on the part of the people, and the formation of a revolutionary movement, subterranean but very keen and of definite political ideals.

Before discussing the events of his reign I shall define the personality of Alexander, a personality that greatly influenced the internal and external development of Russia and of contemporary Europe.

Alexander was the eldest grandson and personal pupil of Catherine, who with much energy, and revealing a remarkable pedagogical talent, endeavoured to make out of him if not an ideal man, at least an ideal ruler. The Imperial grandmother took him away immediately after his birth, and had closely observed to the slightest details his nourishment and education, personally inspecting his nursery, composing an alphabet and fairy-tales for her little grandson, and later not sparing her time in digging out old chronicles and first sources in order to write for him a history text-book. In her letters to Baron Grimm she expressed her views on physical and mental education and on the application of her views to the bringing up of Alexander; in them she showed not only a profound intellect but such energy, tenderness, and love for her grandson, as one could hardly have suspected in that woman accustomed to spend her time upon either state affairs or personal pleasures — sensual and intellectual.

Later Catherine carefully thought out a plan for the further education and development of her grandson, and she drew up her instructions for the staff of teachers and governors, whose chief was Count Saltykov. One of the teachers, Masson, sarcastically remarks in his memoirs that the main and exclusive function of Saltykov consisted in guarding Alexander and his brother from draught and indigestion. But the choice of that ordinary individual as chief educator of the Grand Duke was explained by the fact that Catherine intended to use Saltykov as a screen for her personal interest in the high pupil. Besides, Saltykov in his rank of court-steward in Paul's household had shown his skill as mediator between the Empress and her son

and smoothed over many frictions and difficulties. Catherine had evidently hoped to be able to use his services in the future relations between Paul and Alexander.

The real teachers were indeed remarkable persons. First among them was the Swiss, La Harpe, whose discovery and selection Catherine owed to her connection with the best intellectual forces of contemporary Europe. Grimm recommended him for a travelling companion to Lanskoy, the younger brother of Catherine's favourite. In 1782, when Alexander was barely five years old, La Harpe was invited to remain with him as Chevalier and to teach him French. Two years later La Harpe presented a memorandum about the education of the future emperor, expressing lofty views on the duties of the monarch to his subjects. Catherine approved of his views and plans and gave him full liberty to imbue Alexander with his own ideas, which corresponded to the ideas of the foremost people of his age.

La Harpe was brought up on republican and democratic ideas; he had a high education, and professed lofty views not only in theory, but was in real life scrupulously honest, straightforward, sincere, and incorruptible. These moral qualities had as much influence on Alexander as the knowledge which La Harpe transmitted to him.

La Harpe remained Alexander's tutor and educator eleven years, from 1784 to 1795, and Alexander had frequently declared afterwards in public that whatever was good in him he owed to La Harpe.

The selection of a religious instructor for Alexander and Constantine (his brother) was quite characteristic. The Archpresbyter Somborsky was married to an Englishwoman, lived in England a long time, and had become so accustomed to conditions of Western Europe that Catherine was forced to permit him to wear secular garments and shave his beard and moustache, to the confusion of the entourage. (Orthodox clergy do

not cut or trim their hair and whiskers. Tr.) Somborsky remained with Alexander not less than nine years, and had a favourable influence on his pupils, inspiring them with the belief that they must "find in every human being their neighbour in order to fulfil the law of God." He also taught Alexander English (which Alexander knew from his infancy, his nurse being an Englishwoman).

His instructor in Russian language and history was Mikhail Muraviov, one of the best Russian writers at the end of the eighteenth century, who later collaborated with Karamzin in his researches into Russian history. He was the father of the famous Decembrist, Nikita Muraviov. Alexander preserved for him respect and gratitude all his life. One should mention also Masson, his instructor in mathematics, Pallas, the well known traveller who taught him geography, and the professor of physics, Kraft. His tutor, General Protasov, who had left a curious diary, had a considerable influence over him. He was a man of old regulations, but undoubtedly conscientious and honest; being a patriot and a conservative he did not approve of La Harpe's political views, but admitted his merits, valuing his honesty and incorruptibility. Protasov's rôle consisted mainly in watching Alexander's behaviour, in reprimanding him for the slightest fault, to which Alexander reacted patiently and kindly.

Such was Alexander's education until the age of sixteen. Unfortunately the broad educational plans of Catherine and La Harpe were not brought to a conclusion, but were twisted in the end, when in her last year new state-plans had taken hold of the Empress. Definitely convinced of Paul's incapacity for the throne, she decided to set him aside and proclaim Alexander her heir. At the same time, having in mind her old age, she determined to hasten the education of her grandson. To make him appear grown-up in the eyes of the court she found nothing better than marrying him before he was yet sixteen. La Harpe had fallen into disgrace: the Empress had expected that he would

sympathise with the idea of substituting Alexander for Paul and assist her in preparing his pupil for the plan. But the straight and strict La Harpe suspected a court-intrigue, and although Paul's attitude towards him was hostile he categorically refused to take part in Catherine's plan. The irritated Empress dismissed him immediately after Alexander's wedding under the pretext that the married Grand Duke was no longer in need of a tutor. Thus Alexander was deprived of his chief guide and instructor and at the same time entered into a position which did not in the least correspond with his age.

The plans for his education were in this way confounded. True, he continued reading books according to the programme of La Harpe, who had left, upon Alexander's request, a detailed instruction about his behaviour on all occasions. To be sure the ten years' teaching of La Harpe could not have remained without influence; but the premature interruption of his regulated and systematic education had a very bad effect on Alexander. La Harpe instilled into Alexander a number of high ideas and noble strivings, but he had not had time to give him a sufficient amount of positive knowledge, the acquisition of which was to begin just at the moment when his education was stopped. In regard to his liberal ideas and humanitarian views, Catherine herself, though quite reactionary at the end of her reign, continued in her conversations with Alexander to side with the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment epoch. Curiously enough, she read and explained to him the famous Declaration of Rights, thus strengthening in him his liberal ideas and even republican dreams.

But all this did not make up for the lack of positive knowledge, which, according to the memoirs of Prince Adam Czartoryski, was responsible for the excessive dreaminess of Alexander's intentions.

The development of Alexander's character was unfavourably influenced by the abnormal family conditions and by the un-

healthy court atmosphere in which he grew up, and which could not be paralysed by any educational plans.

Towards Catherine Alexander had always expressed a tender feeling, not at all times, however, sincere. With the growth of consciousness in the sensitive youth he could not overlook the mass of contradictions between the ideas preached to him and the facts round about him. Neither could he help observing the abnormal relations that existed between him and his parents, and between the latter and Catherine. The more he grew and developed the more his eyes opened to the negative sides of Catherine's court and to the unpleasant features of Catherine herself. He could hardly as yet appreciate her state-merits and brilliant gifts, but he could certainly observe or at least feel quite early the atmosphere of falsehood and intrigues that had surrounded her. La Harpe and Protasov did their duty in implanting in their pupil good feelings for his father, while Paul himself could not or would not conceal his negative attitude towards the "big court." At any rate Alexander felt, if he did not know definitely, that his grandmother was responsible for the tense relations between her and his father, and that the latter was the suffering and persecuted victim. Under such conditions it appears very probable that in spite of the savage and unattractive manners in Gatchina there grew up in the heart of the youthful Alexander some sympathy for the position of his father and a concealed condemnation of Catherine. Little by little he began to express in secret to his friends his negative attitude towards his grandmother and her entourage. Openly he could not speak it, trained as he was from his childhood to tell his grandmother only respectful and flattering phrases. No wonder that under such circumstances there developed in him early dissimulation and hypocrisy. It is quite probable that he had received instructions in that spirit at the "little court," if not from his father then from his mother. All the flagrant, and in his eyes revolting, contradictions between the ideas preached

to him from his childhood and the surrounding reality, aroused in Alexander a natural disgust for the court life and the atmosphere of falsehood, intrigues, lewdness, and cupidity that reigned there. By nature reserved, mild, disinclined to sharp forms of protesting, and at the same time greatly inclined towards dreaming and idealisation, owing to the peculiarities of his education, he began to form plans of a peaceful existence as a private person somewhere on the Rhine, and gradually came to the conviction of the possibility and necessity of abdicating from his future high but unpleasant position. Alexander's young wife, Elizabeth, the Princess of Baden, who was barely fourteen at her marriage, shared these plans and maybe took part in their formulation and development. According to the unanimous testimony of her contemporaries, the Grand Duchess Elizabeth was an extremely attractive and fascinating person, of an honest mind and developed intellect open for all the lofty ideas and conceptions that had then inspired her husband. During the years preceding Alexander's accession the young couple lived in perfect harmony; one may even suppose that Elizabeth, more passionate and outspoken than her husband, had exercised a certain influence on the further development of the principles they worked out together.

In the last year of Catherine's reign Alexander's plans, directly opposed to her plans, had evidently ripened definitely, and he described them in his letters to La Harpe and to his young friend Kochubey, then ambassador at Constantinople, and later in a conversation with the young Polish aristocrat and patriot, Prince Adam Czartoryski, with whom he became acquainted not long before. It is not known what La Harpe and Kochubey replied (if they did reply), but Czartoryski testifies in his memoirs that however impressed he was with the mood of the youthful Alexander, however he admired the sincerity, enthusiasm, and simplicity with which Alexander confided to him his thoughts, he even then was able to discern in them dreamy and egoistic elements, which opinion he did not conceal from his exalted friend.

The convictions of Czartoryski and of his other young friends — Stroganov and Novosiltzev — impressed Alexander, and he admitted that he had no right to decline the burden which was descending upon his shoulders at a moment of difficulty for the country, and he soon changed his original decision. Several months after his conversation with Czartoryski he declared that he saw himself obliged to ascend the throne, when the time came, and that he must first grant the land a firm, free, political structure before he might abdicate and retreat into private life.

Later events proved the last decision of Alexander also a dream that was not realised. But before he could bear the test he had to live through the four years of his father's reign — the most trying period in Alexander's life.

Those four years were morbidly reflected in the final formation of his character and on his subsequent fate. His own position and the position of all Russia at that time were passionately described by him in a letter to La Harpe secretly sent with Novosiltzev, who fled abroad from the horrors of Paul's reign in September, 1797. "To state briefly," he wrote in that letter, "the welfare of the state plays no rôle in the management of affairs. There exists only an unlimited power which does everything topsy-turvy. It is impossible to relate all the madnesses that have taken place here. Add to it severity which lacks the slightest justice, not a small amount of partiality, and absolute inexperience in matters (of state). The choice of executives is based on favouritism, merits are of no account. In a word, my unhappy country is in an indescribable state. The farmer is abused, trade is oppressed, freedom and personal security are abolished. Such is the picture of Russia — you may judge how my heart suffers. Obliged to comply with all the details of military service, I waste all my time in fulfilling the functions of a sub-officer, and have no possible chance to devote myself to my studies, which used to be my favourite pastime . . . I have become the most unfortunate man . . ."

This extract shows how Alexander felt as early as the first year of his father's reign. In the same letter he informed La Harpe about the formation of that friendly circle which eventually played such an important rôle in the first years of his reign, and consisted of Czartoryski, Stroganov, Novosiltzev, and Kochubey. Then the young liberals found all roads closed for them, and it was left for them only to translate foreign books, which could not be published. Soon they were forced to give up even that innocent occupation and to disperse in different directions to await a better future.

The position of Alexander grew worse as Paul showed increasing ferociousness in his treatment of his subjects. During those four years he went through a school that was to leave its fatal traces on his whole life. Paul compelled him to be not only a witness, but not infrequently a participant in all his follies and cruel undertakings. At the very beginning of the reign Alexander was appointed Chief Military Governor of Petrograd, which made him the main police official in the capital. Through him had passed thus the mass of punitive measures which Paul had showered upon his subjects. In this position Alexander had to serve with such persons as Arkharov, one of the most revolting Gatchina-men. After Arkharov his fellow-official was Count Palen, the one who eventually became the soul of the conspiracy that brought about the murder of Paul. He was a man of strong will, lustful for power, and of a big mind, but also a cynicist who was unscrupulous about his means.

At times Alexander had to live through tragic moments which left deep morbid traces in his sentimental soul; this took place when Paul wished to emphasise their unanimity. Paul actually made him sign decrees about shooting innocent people in order that all might see, as he had said, that "you and I breathe with the same spirit." One can easily imagine how these facts impressed the twenty year old pupil of La Harpe, after all the idyllic plans he had formed during the last years of Catherine.

Finally Alexander was forced against his will to take part in the conspiracy against his own father. The conspirators did not spare Alexander; they reckoned that by drawing him into the affair they would secure their own safety. Palen and Panin argued with Alexander for months, and at last persuaded him to consent to the removal of Paul and the establishment of a regency.[1] There was no doubt of the need for the welfare and security of Russia of removing the mad Paul. Alexander made Palen swear to him that Paul's life would be spared and then gave his consent for the overthrow.

But when the oath was broken, and the tragic death of Paul took place, Palen explained to Alexander that there had been no other way out. The naïve Alexander had not expected such a tragic result, although one could not have imagined the removal of Paul without the taking of his life. The violent death of his father made a despondent, depressing impression on him, the traces of which remained through all his life. Some of his biographers claim, perhaps not without reason, that the heavy, mystic mood of Alexander in his last years had its roots on one hand in the horrors of Paul's reign, and, on the other, in his indirect participation in his father's assassination.

Under such heavy influences and exceptional conditions had been formed the character of Alexander, which has baffled both his contemporaries and his later biographers. His early childhood passed in the apparently rational and brilliant care of his grandmother, but even then he could not have escaped the harmful influence of the unhealthy atmosphere of Catherine's court and of the strange relations between his parents and the Empress. His further education under La Harpe was suddenly interrupted by his premature marriage and the dismissal of his tutor. Then came a period very unfavourable for a normal course of study; his continued reading after La Harpe's plan

[1] Panin evidently sincerely believed that such was the purpose.

was not accompanied by an acquisition of positive knowledge. Hence — lofty and noble aspirations, but deprived of soil and stability. This inclination to flirt with high plans without considering the methods of their realisation and their consequences, remained with Alexander for ever, and caused those contradictions which we shall observe all through his reign. Finally the horrible four years' schooling under Paul, with its climatic tragedy, had put the finishing touch to the formation of his character.

CHAPTER V

ASCENDING the throne in his twenty-third year, Alexander was no longer the naïve dreamer of the letters to La Harpe in the years 1796–97. True, he had not given up his quest for the good, but he had considerably lost his confidence in people and his former enthusiasm.

In spite of his participation in administrative affairs under Paul he still remained inexperienced and ignorant about Russian conditions. Yet we must not take his despondency and the apparent helplessness he manifested in the first days of his reign as showing lack or weakness of will-power. He proved later that he had a perseverant will and was able to achieve what he wished to, but he wanted, especially at first, positive knowledge, a definite programme and experience. He was well aware of these shortcomings, and for this reason he hesitated, not knowing what to undertake immediately.

At the same time outside of a few old statesmen who did not understand his aims he had no one at his side on whom he could depend and in whom he could confide absolutely. There were clever men of the sort of Palen and Panin, but he could not trust them entirely in view of their rôle in the conspiracy against Paul; it is probable even that they were repulsive to him though he had to conceal the feeling of disgust. The Catherinian lords were dispersed by Paul, the most distinguished among them had died (e.g., Bezborodko), and those who remained inspired no confidence. Alexander was very glad, however, when on the very night of the overthrow there came to his call one of the "old servers," D. P. Troshchinsky, whom he had known as a man honest and experienced in affairs. He

then appointed another "old server," Bekleshev, as Procurator-General in place of the dismissed Obolianinov. Both of these were naturally clever and honest, but not well educated, of no definite ideas or principles, and they managed state-matters according to the usual routine and "common sense."

Of course there were immediately recalled from abroad Alexander's personal friends: Czartoryski, Novosiltzev, Kochubey, but they could not come at once on account of the slow means of communication.

Some are inclined to explain by the weakness of the young tzar the fact that he did not arrest the conspirators, that he retained Count Palen at his post and recalled Count Panin, who had been dismissed by Paul. But knowing at present all the circumstances of the plot we may say that he could have hardly done otherwise, since the two counts did not take direct part in the murder of Paul, and as to actual participation in the conspiracy, Alexander would have had to arrest himself as well. For reasons of state, and because of lack of men around him, Alexander had to appreciate every capable statesman. In the hands of Palen were concentrated all the threads of administration, and he was the only person who knew all the ins and outs of the Government, which was then in a state of chaos. The situation was very difficult and even dangerous, at least externally, so far as foreign relations were concerned. At the end of his reign Paul had seriously enraged England, who was forced to undertake a naval expedition against Russia and its ally, Denmark. A week after Paul's death Nelson bombarded Copenhagen, and having destroyed the Danish fleet, prepared to bombard Cronstadt and Petrograd. Quick action was necessary to stop the English without hurting the national prestige. Palen was the only available member of the Collegium of Foreign Affairs at Petrograd. He performed the task quickly and successfully, perhaps owing to the fact that the British Government had been initiated into the significance of the coup d'état by the

ex-ambassador, Witworth, who knew closely the conspirators. At any rate the English were entirely appeased, and Nelson departed from Reval with apologies.

As to Count Nikita Panin, he was one of the few experienced and gifted diplomats, and his return to affairs was quite natural. Alexander invited him from his Moscow estate to Petrograd, and immediately entrusted him with the management of all foreign affairs.[1]

Despite his depressed mood Alexander demonstrated from his first days great energy in matters that appeared clear to him.

On the very night of the overthrow he did not forget to

[1] The relations of Alexander to Palen and Panin are differently described in the memoirs of the Decembrist Von Visin (nephew of the famous author). According to him Palen and Panin demanded from Alexander a solemn promise to grant a constitution immediately after his accession, but the commander of the Petrograd garrison, General Talyzin, persuaded Alexander not to consent to the demand, and promised him the support of all the Guards in the capital in case of need. Alexander heeded Talyzin and rejected the offer of Palen and Panin, whereupon the infuriated Palen ordered Talyzin poisoned (as a matter of fact Talyzin did suddenly die just at that time). The legend claims that those circumstances were responsible for the dismissal of Palen and Panin. Nobody to-day doubts the incorrectness of that story.

Panin was not even in Petrograd then; he came only several weeks after. Besides, if the story were true, Alexander would have dismissed Palen at once and would not have appointed Panin, whereas both of them resigned months after, when they were no longer needed. The facts of Palen's dismissal are known. He was dismissed on the demand of the Dowager Empress Marie, who had a sharp collision with him in June, 1801, on account of the ikons presented to her by the Old Believers and exhibited by her command in the court chapel; one of the ikons had an inscription in which Palen saw a hint at the desirability of inflicting a severe punishment upon the murderers of Paul. Palen allowed himself to remove the ikon and even complained to Alexander about the matter. The Empress in her turn demanded his discharge. Alexander not only took his mother's side and discharged him, but even banished him from Petrograd.

Panin managed foreign affairs from April to September, 1801. It is well known to-day that Panin did not agree with Alexander's views, and tried his own against the will of Alexander, which proved to be

issue an order for the recall of the Cossacks who were sent to conquer India.

On the same night Troshchinsky formed a hasty, but happy, project for the Manifesto of Accession, in which Alexander solemnly promised to govern the people "after the laws and heart of his grandmother, Catherine the Great." The reference to Catherine was very clever, as it signified in the eyes of the contemporaries the promise to annul all that had been decreed by Paul and a return to the age of Catherine, which appeared then to all in rosy colours.

On the first day Alexander ordered the release of the numerous victims of the Secret Expedition from prison and exile.

Then he began a careful change in personnel; the first to be discharged were: Procurator-General Obolianinov, who performed the rôle of supreme inquisitor under Paul; the equerry Kutaysov, one of Paul's most despicable sycophants, who started as the heir apparent's barber and had attained during Paul's reign the highest rank and distinctions, orders and decorations, and enormous wealth, but was generally hated; the Supreme Chief of Police at Moscow, Ertel, who had terrified the inhabitants of the first Capital.

Then followed a series of ukases annulling the hateful obscurantist and prohibitive measures of Paul: from twelve to fifteen thousand adminstratively discharged clerks and officers were recalled; an amnesty was declared for all fugitives (except homicides); the Secret Expedition was abolished, and it was declared that every offender must be accused, tried, and punished according to the general system of law; officials were strictly warned not to mistreat the citizens; the prohibition of foreign

stronger than Panin had expected. He had to resign. It is no wonder that there were a multitude of various legends concerning the unusual accession of Alexander, which had been veiled in mystery for many years; many important materials illuminating that event were published only very recently.

books was removed, private printing-houses were reopened, the embargo was set aside, and Russians were permitted to go abroad; then the granted charters to the nobility and the cities were restored, and the more liberal tariff of 1797 was reintroduced. The soldiers were exempted from wearing the hated locks, but the somewhat shortened braids remained till 1806. Finally the peasant-question was touched upon: the Academy of Sciences which issued public announcements was enjoined from accepting announcements about sales of serfs without soil. These were the most important measures taken during the first week of Alexander's reign.

All these measures introduced no new radical changes, but merely did away with Paul's tyrannical follies. As to organic changes, Alexander felt that he could not promulgate them without having a definite plan and without preliminary work. Still he made a few early steps in the direction of fundamental reorganisations. Troshchinsky worked out the reformation of the Court Council, which was established by Catherine and had degenerated under Paul into a committee for censoring foreign and Russian books. This Council was dismissed on March 26, and four days later was established the Permanent Council (consisting of twelve high officials least mistrusted by Alexander), which was to act as an advisory board to assist the Tzar in his management of state-affairs. Troshchinsky was one of the members and the Chief of the Council's chancery.

The next important step was the ukase of June 5, 1801, to the Senate, ordering that institution to present a report about its rights and duties for incorporation into the laws of the state. At that moment Alexander was evidently inclined to restore to the Senate its power as the highest organ of government, and to assure it by law an independence of judgments and orders.

Another ukase of the same date instituted "under the Emperor's personal supervision" and under the direct management of Count Zavadovsky, a "Commission for the Constitution of

Laws." The Commission was not to work out any new laws but to clarify and adjust the existing old laws. In his rescript to Zavadovsky Alexander said: "Basing the people's welfare on the uniformity of our laws, and believing that various measures may bring the land happy times but that only the law may affirm them forever, I have endeavoured from the very first days of my reign to investigate the conditions of this department of the state. I have known that since the edition of the *Ulozheniye* (the Code of Laws under Tzar Alexis, in 1649) to our days, i.e., during one century and a half, the laws issuing from different and often contradictory sources and published more for occasions than from general state-considerations, could have neither connection, nor unity of purpose, nor permanence of function. Hence the general confusion of rights and duties, darkness enwrapping both the judge and the defendant, the impotence of the laws in their performance, and the convenience of changing them by the first move of whim or despotism. . . ."

These ukases had an enormous demonstrative importance in their day. After the despotism of Paul the intention of Alexander to augment law above everything had gained for him popularity and sympathy among wide strata of the population.

Such were Alexander's steps in the first three months of his reign.

As early as April 24, 1801, Alexander expressed in a conversation with Stroganov his intention of reorganising the State along radical lines. He agreed with Stroganov, however, that before limiting the autocracy the administration should be reformed.[2]

[2] Let us say a few words about Stroganov and Alexander's other young friends recalled from abroad. Stroganov was the only son of the richest Catherinian lord, Count A. S. Stroganov. His instructor was a French mathematician, Romm, who subsequently was a member and even a temporary president of the Convention of 1793; he died on the scaffold. Romm, a stauncher republican than La Harpe, travelled in 1790 with young Stroganov through Europe, and arriving in Paris during the revolution, both entered the Jacobine club, of

In May, 1801, on the basis of the aforementioned April conversation, Stroganov presented to Alexander a memorandum in which he proposed the institution of an unofficial committee for the discussion of the plan for reorganisations. Alexander approved of the idea, and appointed as members of the Committee Stroganov, Novosiltzev, Czartoryski, and Kochubey. In view

which the Russian became a librarian, and grew intimate with the famous revolutionary, Mlle. Théroigne de Méricourt. Catherine recalled Stroganov and sent him to his village under his mother's supervision; Romm was forbidden to enter Russia. Soon, however, Stroganov was permitted to return to court where he became a friend of Alexander (through Czartoryski), and gradually familiarised himself with Russian conditions. Of his former radicalism and Jacobinism remained a rectilinearity of character and a tendency to realise even liberal reforms in a Jacobine way; but his views were not more than liberal, with a marked democratic tint. From his instructor Romm he adopted a remarkable exactness of thought and a habit of formulating his ideas with absolute definiteness.

Among Alexander's young advisors Stroganov was if not the most gifted, the most steadfast, with a definite plan of action in his mind. Stroganov was five years Alexander's senior, and considered the Emperor a man of noble intentions but lazy and weak. He endeavoured to hold Alexander under the influence of his circle, lest he fall under other influences.

Another member of that circle, N. N. Novosiltzev, was a cousin of Stroganov, appeared considerably more clever than Stroganov, and possessed a brilliant literary style for the exposition of his ideas. He was five years older than Stroganov, consequently much older than Alexander, less passionate, more cautious, though he lacked Stroganov's exactness of thought and consciousness of plan.

A third member of the circle was Prince Adam Czartoryski, a man of remarkable gifts, an ardent native Polish patriot, a subtle diplomat, a sober observer, who understood best of all Alexander's character. In his time he had been also attracted by the revolutionary ideas of 1789, but all his cravings and efforts were directed toward the restoration of a strong, independent Poland. Describing the members of the circle in his memoirs, Czartoryski calls himself the most disinterested, since he took part in a matter foreign to him. He never concealed from Alexander his real intentions and aims, and in 1802, before accepting the post of Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs, he warned Alexander that as a Polish patriot he would side with Polish interests in case of their collision with Russian interests.

The fourth person, originally not a member of the triumvirate, but

of the absence of the last three, the work was postponed till June 24, 1801.

At the first session of the Committee plans and purposes were definitely formulated. They found it necessary first of all to learn the actual state of affairs, then to reform the governmental mechanism, and finally to secure the existence and independence of the renewed institutions by a constitution granted by the autocratic power in accordance with the spirit of the Russian people. The formulation voiced the sentiment of Stroganov, but did not entirely satisfy Alexander, who was preoccupied with the idea of issuing some demonstrative declaration, a sort of "Declaration of Rights."

Novosiltzev was appointed to gather information about the internal state of affairs and to submit reports and opinions on various branches of the administration. Unfortunately this matter was not considered profoundly, but was reduced to the study of the governmental apparatus and the observation of its faults, and it was not a study of the conditions of the people. Novosiltzev's programme embraced the following points: (1) questions of national defence on land and sea; (2) questions of foreign relations; (3) questions of internal affairs of the country in the statistic and administrative respects. By the "statistic respect" one could perhaps understand the study of the conditions of the people, but according to the plan this term meant only: trade, means of communication, agriculture, and industry; the administrative point — which was to be the *clef*

added to it by Alexander, was Count V. P. Kochubey, a distinguished diplomat, a nephew of Bezborodko, who began his career under Catherine, and at the age of 24 occupied with success the post of ambassador at Constantinople. A sincere liberal, he was more moderate than Stroganov and even than Alexander. He was brought up in England, and knew it better than Russia. He took part in the internal reforms of Russia, for which he willingly gave up his brilliant diplomatic career (he had the rank of Vice-Chancellor under Paul).

de la voute of the plan,— comprised: justice, finances, and legislation.

Statistics in our modern sense did not exist at that time; besides, the sessions of the Committee were secret, and a consensus gentium could not take place. The only statistic data in the possession of the Committee were those received through the Permanent Council, or through the Emperor, or some private sources in the governmental spheres. The members could have made use of their own information, but only Stroganov had some acquaintance with internal affairs, owing to his life in a village, while Kochubey and Czartoryski had some knowledge of international matters.

The discussion of the first point of the programme, the defence of the country, did not occupy much time, and the question was handed over to a special commission of military and naval experts. The discussion of the second point, of foreign relations, revealed Alexander's complete unpreparedness and ignorance in matters of foreign policy. Kochubey and Czartoryski, on the other hand, had quite definite knowledge and views in the matter. Alexander, who had just signed a friendly treaty with England, suddenly expressed his opinion before the Committee about the need of forming a coalition against England. The members felt confused and uneasy, all the more since they knew the Emperor's inclination to converse personally with foreign representatives and thus entangle matters. The Committee insistently counselled Alexander to ask the opinion of old experienced diplomats on the question, and they pointed out Count A. R. Vorontzov.

This first flaw strongly impressed Alexander, and he came to the next session better prepared. He asked Kochubey to expound his view on the foreign policy. Kochubey in his turn expressed his desire first to get acquainted with the views of the Emperor. An exchange of opinions took place. All

agreed with the views of Czartoryski and Kochubey that England was Russia's natural ally, receiving almost all her export.

At the same time they pointed out the need for checking the over-ambitious aspiration of the French Government. These views were in direct opposition to Alexander's original views; but soon he demonstrated his remarkable talents in the field of diplomacy, and succeeded not only in orienting himself in foreign affairs, but in working out an independent outlook on those questions.

At the next sessions of the Committee internal affairs were discussed with numerous digressions. Alexander was interested most of all in two problems that appeared interdependent in his mind; the first was the granting of some "charta" or declaration of rights, and in connection with this the second — the reorganisation of the Senate, in which he saw at that time the guarantor of civil rights. In the latter question Alexander was supported even by the old senators, by liberals as well as by conservatives. Prince P. A. Zubov (the last favourite of Catherine) presented a project for making the Senate an independent legislative body, consisting of highest officials and highest nobles. Derzhavin proposed that the Senate be composed of persons elected by the officials of the first four ranks from their midst. The Committee had no difficulty in proving that those projects had little in common with a popular representation.

The third project handed over to the Committee by Alexander was planned by A. R. Vorontzov, and it had to do not with the reorganisation of the Senate but with the Emperor's idea about a charta. Vorontzov's project for granting the people a charter resembled in form Catherine's charters granted to the nobility and the cities, and in substance it expanded over the whole people, giving them serious guaranties of civil rights not unlike the English Habeas Corpus Act. At the discussion of the project by the Committee Novosiltzev expressed his doubt whether such promises could be given under the con-

ditions of that time, and his fear that if given they would have to be withdrawn in a few years. Alexander hastened to agree with Novosiltzev's opinion, and the Committee decided that the publication of the charter at the time of the coronation would be inopportune.

This incident is very characteristic, showing how careful were those members of the Committee whom their enemies labelled Jacobines. The "old server" Vorontzov demonstrated on many occasions that he could be more liberal than the "Jacobines" assembled in the Winter Palace.

The same moderate and conservative views were expressed in regard to the peasant-question. The Committee touched the question for the first time in connection with Vorontzov's charter, which had a clause about giving the peasants the right to own real estate. Alexander found it at that time too dangerous a right. Later, after the coronation, in November, 1801, Alexander informed the Committee that a number of persons, among them La Harpe, invited by the Emperor to return to Russia, and Admiral Mordvinov, a convinced constitutionalist of the type of an English Tory, had declared the need of doing something for the peasants. Mordvinov proposed a practical measure, apparently having little to do with the peasant-question proper, which consisted in extending the right of real estate ownership to merchants, burghers, and state-peasants. Mordvinov had his own logic, however.

He considered that the limitation of the autocratic power could be best secured by the presence of an independent nobility, hence his desire to create such an independent aristocracy in Russia. He advocated the transference of a considerable part of fiscal lands (by sale or gift) to the nobles, so as to increase their material security and independence. As to the peasant-question and the abolition of serfdom, he thought that the supreme authority had no right to meddle with those matters, but that the liberation of the serfs from bondage should be de-

cided by the nobles alone. Having this point of view, Mordvinov intended to create an economic state in which the nobles would find bondage-labour unprofitable and would willingly resign their rights. He hoped that on the lands owned by commoners there would develop farms on the basis of hired labour, which would compete with the bondage-system and compel the landowners to abolish that system. Thus Mordvinov had in mind a roundabout way for preparing the abolition of serfdom, instead of any legislative restrictions in that field. Such was the status of the peasant-question even among liberal and enlightened men like Mordvinov.

Zubov, who had no principles but simply tried to meet Alexander's liberal ideas, also presented a project about the peasant-question, even more liberal than that of Mordvinov: he proposed to forbid the sale of serfs without soil. We have seen that Alexander had already enjoined the Academy of Sciences from publishing announcements about such sales; but Zubov went further: desiring to lend the institution of serfdom a character of ownership of estates to which permanent labourers were assigned (glebæ adscripti), he proposed to forbid ownership of house-serfs, transferring them into tzekhs and guilds and recompensing the landowners with money for the loss they sustained.

In the Committee the first to oppose categorically Zubov's project was Novosiltzev. He pointed out that, first, the State had no money for the redemption of the house-serfs, and, next, that it was uncertain what could be done with such a mass of men incapable of helping themselves. There was further expressed an opinion that it was inadvisable to take at once several measures against serfdom for fear of irritating the nobles. Nobody shared Novosiltzev's ideas; but Alexander was evidently shaken by them. Czartoryski spoke passionately against serfdom, arguing that it was such a revolting institution that in the struggle against it there should be no fears or hesitations.

Kochubey maintained that in case of the acceptance of Mordvinov's project the bonded peasants would consider themselves overlooked, since the other classes would get important rights while their lot would not be alleviated. Stroganov delivered a long, brilliant speech which was directed mainly against the idea that it was dangerous to irritate the nobles; he showed that politically the Russian nobles were zero, that they were incapable of protesting, that they could be only slaves of the Monarch; in proof he pointed to the reign of Paul when the nobles had shown that they were unable to protect their own honour when it was trampled by the Government with the aid of other nobles. At the same time he asserted that the peasants still considered the Tzar as their only defender, that the loyalty of the people to the Tzar depended upon their hopes in him, and that to shake those hopes was indeed dangerous. Therefore he believed that if apprehensions should be entertained at all, the last ones should be considered most of all.

His speech was listened to with great attention, and it had an effect, but it did not shake either Alexander or Novosiltzev. Zubov's project was rejected. In the end they accepted Mordvinov's plan; thus persons of not-noble classes were permitted to buy unpopulated lands. Novosiltzev asked permission to consult La Harpe and Mordvinov concerning Zubov's project; the two shared Novosiltzev's apprehensions. It is remarkable that La Harpe who was considered a Jacobine and a democrat remained in the peasant-question as undecisive and timid as the rest. He saw Russia's chief need in education and stubbornly emphasised that without education nothing could be accomplished, yet though he admitted the difficulty of spreading education under conditions of bondage, he feared the danger of seriously affecting the institution of serfdom under such conditions of education. A peculiar enchanted circle.

The members of the Committee proposed that in the course of time they might, by a slow and gradual process, come to the

abolition of serfdom, but even the course of that process remained obscure.

Trade, industry, and agriculture were not investigated, although the state of those branches of national economy was such that it required the serious attention of the Government.

The most important work of the Committee consisted in the reorganisation of the central administrative organs. The need of this had been evident since Catherine had reformed the local organs, but had not had time to reorganise the central institutions, except to abolish the larger part of the Collegia. The members of the Committee saw the pressing need for the reorganisation of the central organs, where the confusion was so great that in cases of great disturbances or calamities, as for instance when in Siberia people died from famine, there was no way of obtaining information about the state of affairs. Under the influence of such an occasion Alexander expressed his desire that the question of the differentiation of the jurisdiction among the central organs should be advanced in the work of the Committee. In the absence of Novosiltzev the Emperor instructed Czartoryski to present a report on the question. On February 10, 1802, Czartoryski read his clear and orderly report, in which he pointed out the necessity of dividing the jurisdiction of the supreme administrative organs, the supervisory, judiciary, and legislative, and of clearly defining the rôle of each. In his opinion the Senate should be independent from its chancery; as it was, the real ruler of the Senate appeared to be the Procurator-General who as head of the chancery had the privilege of personally reporting to the tzar. Then Czartoryski advocated the exact definition of the jurisdiction of the Permanent Council, and the differentiation of the jurisdiction of the Senate and the Permanent Council. He suggested that the Senate should deal only with contestable matters both administrative and judicial, while the Permanent Council should be an advisory institution discussing matters and projects of a legislative nature. The

supreme administration should be divided among separate departments, each with a strictly defined sphere of work; at the head of each department should be, not a Collegium, but one responsible minister. He aptly explained how in the Collegia any personal responsibility necessarily disappeared.

We see thus that the merit of introducing the question of ministries belongs to Czartoryski. At one time this was ascribed to La Harpe, but since the publication of the Committee's minutes which were accurately written down by Stroganov, there have been no more doubts in this respect. In the report another measure was advocated, touching the part of the judiciary. Czartoryski wished to copy the system introduced in France after the Revolution, which divided the courts into three classes: criminal, civil, and police. The highest appeal for all judiciary matters should be to the Supreme Court of Cassations. This part of Czartoryski's plan was not thoroughly examined by the Committee but his idea about the institution of ministries was accepted unanimously. The work of the Committee became concentrated on the development of that idea; on the basis of that work there were established September 8, 1802, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of War, and of the Navy, which corresponded to the three then still existing Collegia, and entirely new Ministries of the Interior, Finances, Popular Education, and Justice. Upon Alexander's initiative there was formed also the Ministry of Commerce, on the institution of which he insisted for absolutely casual reasons, as he wished to give the rank of Minister to Count N. P. Rumiantzev, who had been in charge of the waterways.

The establishment of ministries was, properly speaking, the only original and accomplished work of the Committee. The reorganisation of the Senate took place in accordance with Czartoryski's ideas and with the report of the Senate about its rights. The Senate was to be an organ of state supervision over the administration and at the same time the highest judiciary body.

The following points were accepted in regard to the reformed Senate: (1) The Senate was to be the supreme administrative and judiciary institution in the Empire; (2) the power of the Senate was to be limited only by the power of the Emperor; (3) the Emperor was to preside in the Senate; (4) the ukases of the Senate were to be fulfilled by all, as the ukases of the Tzar himself, who alone could stop their fulfilment; (5) the Senate was to be permitted to present an opinion concerning such Imperial ukases as it might appear impossible to carry out, or which seemed to be opposed to other laws, or not clear; but if after the Senate's presentation no changes were made in the protested ukase, it was to remain valid; (6) the ministers were to submit to the Senate their yearly accounts for examination; the Senate could require from them information and explanations and should report to the Tzar about any faults and abuses it found; (7) in case of disagreement between certain decisions of the general assembly of the Senate and the opinion of the Procurator-General or the Super-Procurator, the matter should be submitted to the Tzar; (8) in criminal cases involving deprivation of nobility and rank the confirmation of the Tzar should be sought; (9) for unjust complaints against the Senate before the Tzar offenders should be tried by court; (10) senators impeached in a crime should be judged by the general assembly of the Senate.

On the whole these fundamental points of the senatorial jurisdiction did not contradict the fundamental statutes of Peter's Reglament.

The sixth point of the Reglament aroused at the session of the Committee sharp opposition on the part of Alexander who was afraid that the Senate would hamper his reformatory activities by displaying control over the ministers. The obstinacy with which he protested against that point showed the superficiality of his liberal views; at the first practical attempt to submit to control not even his own acts, but those of his assistants, he at

once demonstrated a stubborn opposition to the plan in which he now saw but aggravating negative sides. Not without foundation did he fear that the Senate, composed of "old servers," would try to check his reformatory activity, but it is curious that in view of that apprehension Alexander was unable to hold to his principle.

The superficiality of his political views was still more clearly demonstrated on another occasion, in connection with the fifth point of the Reglament, which gave the Senate the right to protest against Imperial ukases if they did not correspond with the laws, or were not clear, or for some reason or other inconvenient. This right corresponded with the *droit de remontrance,* the privilege of the old French parlements.

Soon after the publication of the new Reglament there came an occasion for the application of that privilege. Upon the report of the Minister of War the Emperor declared that all the nobles of the sub-officer rank had to serve twelve years in the army. One of the senators, Count Severin Potocky, justly found in it an infringement of the granted Charter, and he suggested that the Senate make use of its right to protest. The Procurator-General, G. R. Derzhavin, was so astounded by the idea of protesting that without placing the protest before the Senate he reported to Alexander. The Emperor was disconcerted at the news, but he ordered action to proceed according to the law. On the next day Derzhavin appeared before Alexander and reported: "Sire, the entire Senate is against you on the question raised by Potocky." The Emperor, according to Derzhavin (in his memoirs), changed in countenance, but only said that the Senate should send him a deputation with a report on the motives of their protest. Alexander received the deputation very dryly, accepted the written report, and promised to consider it. After a long time, in March of 1803, he issued an ukase which declared that the Senate had misinterpreted its rights, that the right of protest was extended only in regard to

old ukases, but not to new ukases; these the Senate was to accept promptly.

It is difficult to comprehend how Alexander with the *idea* of limiting the autocratic power could justify such contradictions in practice. Alexander's behaviour in the above case was the stranger since the disputed right of the Senate did not limit his power in fact, for according to the Reglament the Senate was to accept the protested ukase if the Emperor refused to consider the protest. But such were the superficial political views of Alexander at that time.

Thus the chief results of the work of the Committee were the establishment of the Ministries and the issue of the new Reglament for the Senate. In May of 1802 the sessions of the Committee in the Winter Palace were practically discontinued; Alexander left for a meeting with the King of Prussia, and upon his return did not summon the Committee. At the end of 1803 the Committee was assembled several times again, but for the discussion of private questions unrelated to the work of reorganisation. Actually, then, the Committee was in existence for one year.

Let us summarise its activity. The conservatives of the time, "old servers" and inveterate serf-owners of Derzhavin's type, called the members of the Committee "a band of Jacobines." But we have seen that if they could be accused of anything, it was of timidity and of the inconsequentiality with which they pursued the course of liberal reforms. The two chief problems of the day — the bondage and the autocracy — were reduced to nought. The only important result of its work was an administrative reform, quite daring in the technical sense; the "old servers" attacked the institution of the Ministries as an arrogant blow at Peter's collegiate principle. The critics also pointed out the unfinished form of the law, its lack of harmony in defining the jurisdiction of the Senate and the Permanent Council, and their relation to the Ministries; the

chief point of attack was the want of a regulation for the inner composition of the Ministries, of a separate instruction for each Ministry, and of a clear statement about the relation of the Ministries to the provincial institutions.

The reproach for mistreating Peter's legislation had no foundation, for we have seen that the Collegia had been abolished by Catherine, and Alexander's task consisted not in supplanting the existing Collegia with ministries, but in erecting a new building on a vacant place. As to the flaws in the law, they were numerous indeed. The law embraced in one statute all the Ministries, there were no separate instructions, the inner order was not worked out, the relation of the Ministries to the provincial institutions was not clear. But admitting all this, we must say that the establishment of the Ministries was the means of doing away with a considerable portion of those faults; they were new institutions, and had to be given a chance for a gradual, empirical development of their inner order and for the regulation of mutual relations among various departments.[3]

Such were the tangible results of the Committee's work.

But for Alexander himself work on the Committee with its educated and talented members was a very useful school which had made up to some extent for his lack of positive knowledge. Having made use of the lessons he had received in the Committee, and having accepted as a gift from it an excellent instrument for the further development of his internal policy, in the form of the Ministries and the Committee of Ministers, Alexander undoubtedly felt firmer and more conscious in his intentions and was better equipped for the promulgation of his political plans than he had been a year before. This may certainly be said also with respect to his foreign policy in which he soon manifested great originality.

[3] All the mentioned faults of the first ministerial law were soon observed by V. P. Kochubey, as it can be seen from his report to Alexander on March 28, 1806.

CHAPTER VI

FROM the study of the state measures we shall now turn to an examination of the position of society at the time of Alexander's accession and during the first years of his reign, and of the changes in the conditions of the country and its economic and social life that took place during that time. All historians agree as to the general mood that reigned in the country after the death of Paul.

"All is calm and peaceful," wrote the Empress Elizabeth to her mother, "unless we speak of the mad joy that has taken possession of everybody, from the last muzhik to the highest ranks of society . . . I breathe peacefully together with all Russia."

Wiegel, eye-witness of the Moscow reception of the accession-manifesto, wrote in his memoirs: "This is one of those reminiscences which time can never erase: a silent general joy illumined by a bright spring sun. . . . Common embraces, as on the day of Easter-Sunday; not a word about the deceased, so as not to darken even for a moment the hearty gladness that burned in all eyes; not a word about the past, but only about the present and the future . . ."

The public rejoiced over their deliverance from the terrors and tribulations of Paul's régime; at once there reappeared the forbidden hair-dresses, hats, carriages, for even such miserable privileges had been taken away by the despot. More earnest patriots rejoiced not so much over the passing of the terror as over the advent of a new epoch with which they connected the most rosy hopes. They saw a confirmation of their hopes in the energetic activity of the young Monarch who tried from the

outstart to erase and smoothe over all the morbid traces of his father's reign, and to revoke all his oppressive and hateful measures.

The progressive elements had good reasons for expecting radical reforms from the new Tzar whose political views had been known even before he had declared them in his early ukases. It is curious, however, to note that all these liberals associated their constitutional expectations with the manifesto of March 12, in which Alexander promised to reign according to the heart and will of his grandmother. But Catherine was a convinced autocrat, with no thoughts about granting a constitution! The public had evidently suffered so much under Paul that it looked back to the time of Catherine as to the golden age. Generally speaking there were many young men who had dreamt about limiting the absolutism, but most of them were poorly informed as to the real foundations of a constitutional order.

For the time being they felt satisfied with the chance to breathe freely and to get a respite from the mad governmental terror; even such enlightened and scholarly men as Academic Storch, the investigator of Adam Smith, in his chronicle of Alexander's early reign considered all the young Monarch's measures for the first five years as direct steps toward a constitutional state. Even the incident with Potocky and the wilful interpretation of the rights of the Senate that followed, aroused no criticism of Alexander among his contemporaries. The nobles organised ovations in honour of Potocky and hostile demonstrations against Derzhavin and Viazmitinov (the minister of war and author of the circular that had caused the whole imbroglio), but nobody thought of accusing Alexander, or of questioning the sincerity of his constitutional intentions.

The liberal-rosy mood of the public was reflected also in the periodical press which reappeared immediately after the unsealing of the private printing-houses. The first magazine

to have gained great importance after 1802 was the *European Messenger,* issued by Karamzin, the most popular and favourite publication of the time, as may be seen from the fact that Karamzin earned six thousand rubles a year from subscriptions only. Karamzin himself no longer belonged to the young generation; he had lived through his "Sturm und Drang Periode" back in the nineties of the eighteenth century, when he wrote his *Letters of a Russian Traveller.* At the beginning of the nineteenth century he was already a well-balanced writer of ultra-sentimental tendencies, author of such works as *Poor Lize* over which our grandmothers raved so much.

Karamzin asserted in 1802 that all the nations had grown convinced of the necessity of a firm government after a decade of revolutionary wars, and that all governments had become convinced of the importance of public opinion, of the need of popular loyalty and of the necessity of eradicating abuses. He saw then the pledge for the aggrandisement of Russia's prestige and glory in the development of civil consciousness and the spread of education in the country; for this reason he sympathised at that time with Alexander's mild rule and with his liberal and enlightening measures. He had not yet become that extreme conservative who later condemned Alexander's liberalism and fiercely opposed Speransky. In the *European Messenger* Karamzin lauded the human policy of the Government. "Russia sees on her throne a beloved Monarch who zealously desires her happiness, guided by the rule that virtue and enlightenment should be the basis of national welfare . . ."

"Through our zeal for education we shall prove that we do not fear its consequences, and wish to enjoy only such rights as agree with the general well-being of the state and with love for mankind."

The magazine had an abundance of sentimental novels partly original and partly translated; in its publicistic department was preached a sentimental and haughty patriotism, and very opti-

mistic views were expressed on Russian reality, including serfdom, which was described idyllically, the landowners figuring in most cases as benefactors of their peasants. Praising Alexander's first reforms and greeting the establishment of ministries, Karamzin found it opportune to emphasise the formation of an intelligent public opinion that had taken place in Russia. "The time has passed," he wrote, "when the Monarch's grace and a peaceful conscience could be the reward of a virtuous minister. . . . Now it is glorious to deserve together with the Monarch's grace also the love of the enlightened Russians."

By the success of the *European Messenger* we may judge that it corresponded to the tastes and requirements of the public. There was a number of other sentimental-idyllic magazines; one should mention the *Moscow Mercury,* which was the first to introduce a critical department where at times negative views about other publications were expressed. This magazine was also the first to raise the woman-problem in the most energetic manner; in the very first number it advocated the need of woman-education and her participation in the social life of the country; it pointed out the rôle of the French salons in enlightening the public. The reign of sentimentalism in the tastes of that time was responsible for the appearance of such revolting magazines as the *Magazine for Lovers,* or the *Moscow Observer* and similar frivolous publications that offered empty anecdotes and dubious stories. Those magazines had also a reactionary character: they attacked the free-thinkers who doubted the usefulness of orders and ranks, and so forth. In the *Friend of Enlightenment* appeared attacks against the new reforms, written by Derzhavin and Shishkov.

The progressive elements united in 1804 around the *Magazine of Russian Letters*, published by Brusilov with the active co-operation of the talented publicist, I. P. Pnin. Pnin had there an imaginary dialog between a censor and an author in China, in which he expressed a definite liberal view on the

necessity of freedom of the press and the futility of any censorship; in his verses, which were very popular, Pnin also discussed personal freedom and the abnormality of serfdom. Still more radical was Pnin's pamphlet "An Essay on Education," which was published in 1804, but the second edition of which was forbidden by the censor. It is curious that although Pnin was a liberal, his educational ideas were based on a class-point of view. In his opinion there should be special schools for each class — for peasants, commoners, merchants, and nobles; the children of the lower classes should study a cycle of subjects corresponding to their needs, and only the nobles were to acquire the higher sciences and abstract knowledge.

Not less remarkable was another liberal organ, the *Northern Messenger,* published by I. I. Martynov, director of the chancery of the Ministry of Education. The magazine was financially supported by the Government, and carried on a polemic with all reactionaries. In its educational programme it agreed with the views of Pnin. Politically it tried to prepare the minds for constitutional ideas. It considered England as the ideal country in the political sense. In one article it advocated an aristocratic constitution of the type that corresponded with the views of Mordvinov, mentioned above, and one may assume that the article was inspired by Mordvinov.

Another liberal magazine was published from 1804 to 1806, *Periodical Publication of the Society of Lovers of Letters,* the editor and chief publicist of which, Popugaiev, lent it an outspoken democratic tendency, in contrast to the *Northern Messenger.*

In 1804 a censorship-statute was issued, copied from that of Denmark, which established preliminary censorship of all publications. Though the statute was not liberal in substance, it recommended the censors to be lenient with authors. In view of the liberal views of the Government the press enjoyed

in fact considerable freedom; it could print what it wanted to, but one must say that it did not want overmuch.

The existence of all these magazines shows how strongly the public interest in political thought had been cultivated at that time, with the direct co-operation of the Government.

Besides magazines there appeared during that period a mass of new books, economic, political, juridical, and philosophical treatises, of which the majority presented expositions and translations of European works of the later eighteenth century. For this purpose Alexander generously offered subsidies, which amounted to more than sixty thousand rubles in five years. The translator of Adam Smith received five thousand rubles, and about the same sum was given to the publishers of Bentham and Tacitus. Among the published works were the political tractates of Beccaria, Montesquieu, Mably, and others. A detailed account of the books published then occupies a considerable part of the ninth volume of Storch's *Russland unter Alexander dem Ersten.*

Such was the mood of the Government, of the public, and particularly of the metropolitan *intelligentzia* and press during the first five years of Alexander's reign.

As to the masses, no essential changes in their condition had taken place since the time of Catherine, and my sketch of the position of the peasants under Catherine holds true also concerning the first years of the nineteenth century. One should note, however, that the peasants, who usually manifested restlessness at each new accession, remained calm at Alexander's accession.

The most prominent act of Alexander's early reign in regard to the peasant question was the ukase of February 20, 1803, concerning the Free Agriculturists. The law was issued on the basis of Count Rumiantzev's memorandum, and it allowed serf-owners to liberate their bondmen individually or by whole villages not otherwise than with land-allotments under conditions

arrived at by mutual agreement between the owners and their serfs; the agreement was to be presented to the Emperor for sanction, after which it became a legal enactment. The peasants thus liberated were called Free Agriculturists, and the Government could not dispose of their land as it did of that of the Fiscal peasants.

The serfdom-advocates considered the ukase extremely harmful, not without reason, seeing in it the first symptom of hostility toward the bondage system. Derzhavin made many efforts to prevent the enactment of that law, but he achieved only an Imperial reprimand. In the years immediately following the publication of the ukase there were concluded on its basis a very few agreements, by which the peasants had to pay as much as five hundred rubles in assignations per person. One may judge how high that price was by the fact that in the fifties the value of the landowners' estates (with the land and buildings) divided by the number of bondmen did not exceed two hundred to three hundred rubles per soul.

Altogether there were made during the reign of Alexander one hundred and sixty agreements about Free Agriculturists, the total number of liberated peasants amounting to 47,153 male souls; in seventeen cases the liberation was transacted without redemption (the number of freely liberated peasants was 7,415, of which 7,000 were liberated without land by the bequest of one landowner). In other cases the peasants bought their freedom; the average redemption sum for the whole reign equalled three hundred and ninety-six rubles in assignations per soul, or about one hundred rubles in silver (according to the course established after the year 1809). In single cases the Government helped the peasants to pay out their redemption-fees.

The next peasant-measure was the regulation of February 20, 1804, concerning the peasants of the Lifland province. The initiative in this case belonged to the landowners of the prov-

ince themselves, as a result of the liberation movement that had started under Catherine. The regulations were worked out by a special committee that consisted of Kochubey, Stroganov, Kozodavlev, and two representatives of the Lifland nobility, and according to them, (1) it was forbidden to sell or pledge peasants without land; (2) the peasants received personal rights, self-government and *volost*-courts;[1] (3) the peasants became hereditary owners of their land portions, which they could lose only by the verdict of the court, or for profligacy; (4) the *barshchina* was limited to two days; (5) in the *obrok*-estates the money dues established by a special revision-commission could not be raised by the landowners, while the curtailment of the peasants' portions could take place only for a special compensation; (6) the houseworkers and journeymen remained under the disciplinary authority of the landowners, but the peasants could be punished only by verdict of the *volost*-court.

In 1805 similar regulations were worked out for the province of Estland, though on conditions somewhat less favourable for the peasants. These regulations later played a certain part in the course of the peasant-question, as we shall see.

Alexander's personal attitude toward the peasant-question at that time was characterised by his attention to peasant-complaints against their landowners and by his inflicting severe punishments upon guilty owners, usually depriving them of the management of their estates.

Economically the land underwent no radical changes during that period. The population increased normally in the absence of wars or other extraordinary calamities. The general increase of the population for the years 1801–1805 equalled 2,655,000.

The first five years of Alexander's reign saw a rapid development of the colonisation of southern Russia. At the same

[1] A *volost* is a district consisting of several villages.— Tr.

time the immigration of foreign colonists continued to grow owing to the rumours about the improved conditions of administration, and also to the privileges offered the colonists by the manifesto of 1763. From 1803 to 1805 five thousand male colonists settled in New Russia (Germans, Czechs, and various southern Slavs).

In the meantime there began to appear a dearth of land in densely populated regions, such as the provinces of Tula and Kursk, where the extensive system of agriculture predominated and industry was slightly developed. The Government began to transport Fiscal peasants from those places to New Russia, and encouraged privately organised immigration of peasants, allotting them land on favourable conditions. The Government was forced to change its attitude toward foreign immigration in view of the need of land in Russia proper, and also because of the numerous disorders in the foreign colonies that had taken place during Catherine and Paul. In 1804 Kochubey presented a report on the question to the Committee of Ministers, after which it was decided, (1) to make use of the southern steppes primarily for the colonisation of Russians, and (2) to handle more cautiously foreign immigration by discontinuing the practice of inviting masses from abroad and by allowing only such immigrants as had means for defraying their travel-expenses and for establishing themselves on the new place, and who would at the same time be capable of introducing better methods in agriculture, or be skilled in some craft.

In spite of numerous errors, failures, and abuses of various authorities, the colonisation of New Russia developed intensely. Empty expanses became peopled with Russians as well as with foreigners: Germans, German Mennonites, southern and western Slavs (especially since disturbances had begun in Turkey), and Jews from White Russia. The cultivation of the fertile southern fields was markedly reflected on the productivity of

Russian grain, the export of which had grown thirty times since the middle of the eighteenth century and five to six times since the eighties. The lion share of the export consisted of corn that was raised in the newly cultivated southern steppes.

Caring for the rapid economic development of the South, the Government granted various privileges to the colonists in regard to the payment of dues and taxes, and also trade privileges, by establishing free ports at first in Crimea (under Paul) and later in Odessa. Odessa, established by Catherine, was administered at that time by the French émigré, Duke Richelieu (ultimately minister of Louis XVIII), and rapidly grew into a large commercial city and port.

In connection with the colonisation-policy of the Government we should mention here two big problems of internal life that had come to the front about that time: that of the Jews and of the Sectarians.

The first was directly connected with the annexation at the end of the eighteenth century of the vast Polish-Lithuanian provinces that contained one million Jews. Up to that time the question had only a limited importance, touching mainly the permission for Jewish merchants to appear at Little Russian fairs. This permission was regulated by a ukase of Catherine I (in 1727), and was later greatly curbed by Elizabeth. Under Catherine II, after the annexation of Crimea, New Russia, and the partitions of Poland, there was introduced for the first time the idea of a Jewish Pale of Settlement, which consisted of the provinces of Little Russia, New Russia, Crimea, and the territories included in the three partitions of Poland. The Jews were forbidden to enter other parts of the Empire, but within the Pale they were given all civil rights of the "middle sort." Only at the end of Catherine's reign, by the law of 1794, were the Jews required to pay double taxes in comparison with the taxes of Christian commoners and merchants. Under Paul

the law remained intact; in his last years Derzhavin, who had performed a senatorial revision of White Russia in view of its failure of crops and famine, presented a special report on the Jewish question, which was disregarded by Paul and remained in the Senate until 1802, when the question came under discussion. A special committee was organised to examine "the complaints of the inhabitants of those provinces where Jews lived, about various abuses and disorders detrimental to agriculture and industry." As a result of the committee's work came the "Statute concerning the Jews" of 1804. The Jews were as before forbidden to settle outside of the Pale, but the Pale itself was somewhat expanded; to the provinces of Lithuania, White Russia, Little Russia, Kiev, Minsk, Volhyn, Podolsk, Kherson, Ekaterinoslav, and Tavrida (Crimea), were added the provinces of Astrakhan and the Caucasus; in view of complaints against Jew-smugglers, they were not allowed to settle within fifty versts of the frontier. Within the Pale the Jews were to enjoy "the protection of the law on equal basis with the other Russian subjects." The Statute, however, specified the civil rights of the Jews, setting forth a double purpose: to encourage their assimilation with the rest of the population and to direct them to useful work that they might abandon such occupations as exploited the local population, especially the lower class, whose frequent complaints to the Government had brought about the discussion of the Jewish question. The Jews were divided by the Statute of 1804 into four classes: (1) agriculturists, (2) factory-owners and artisans, (3) merchants, and (4) commoners. They were encouraged to take up farming and were forbidden to keep taverns in villages. The Statute endeavoured to secure for the Jews all means of education, in which respect it differed favourably from the later policy of the Government in the same question. Their children could attend all primary schools, gymnasia, and universities, and were granted the same degrees as other subjects

of the Empire. For the Jews who in view of their religious exclusiveness were unwilling to send their children to common schools, the Government ordered special schools established, for the maintenance of which an extra tax was levied on the Jews. According to Prof. A. D. Gradovsky the Statute of 1804 has been the starting point for all the subsequent legislation concerning the Jews, and one should note that the further measures have developed by no means favourably for the Jews, so that the Statute of 1804 is in many respects much better disposed toward them than the later policy of the Government.

More favourable and human was the attitude of the Government, and particularly of the Emperor himself, towards the various Russian and foreign sects. Such sects as the *Dukhobory* and *Molokane* were granted toleration, while under Catherine the *Dukhobory* were sentenced to be burned, and only through the intercession of the Empress were they exiled instead to Siberia. Alexander protected all rationalistic sects and considered useless not only repressive measures against Sectants and Schismatists, but even the missionary activity of the Orthodox church.

The rapid growth of the fertile South was reflected on the industrial life of the northern, not black-soil, provinces. Unable to compete with the South in the production of cereals, particularly of corn, they concentrated their activity on the production of flax and hemp and their fabrics, which was greatly aided by the removal of the commercial restraints in the relations with England, the chief consumer at that time of flax and hemp for its fleet. The restoration of the liberal tariff of 1797 and the abolition of Paul's restrictions in regard to foreign lands, had benefited the Russian foreign trade, and the temporary trade-balance had in its turn favourably impressed the course of the paper-money, notwithstanding the new issues of assignations for the extinction of the yearly deficits. This favourable financial situation after the depressed state of

affairs under Paul had aroused in governmental circles an excessive optimism and carelessness in financial management, the results of which were quite painful; but at the same time it allowed the progressive government to spend generously on various productive purposes, and first of all on education. Of a similar productive importance were the enormous subsidies given for the building of waterways, mainly begun under Catherine and Paul and finished during the first years of Alexander,[2] and the expenses for the colonisation of the South. Yet the lion-portion of the budget was even at that time absorbed by the army and navy (30–40 per cent.). About 10 per cent. went for the court expenses; Alexander had tried to cut down the extravagant court expenditures, so that the courtiers, used to the prodigality of Catherine and Paul, loudly accused him of parsimony. In view of the broadened progressive activity of the Government, the income from the earlier established taxes could not cover the new expenses, and the budgets brought yearly deficits of about 20–25 per cent. Instead of revising the tax-system by a simple proportional increase of the direct taxes, the Government covered the deficit year after year by issues of assignations, the course of which had not fallen, but had, on the contrary, risen, owing to the rapid development of foreign commerce and to a favourable balance of trade. By the end of Catherine's reign the course of the assignations

[2] In 1805 was the Beresina canal opened for navigation. It joined the Dnieper with Western Dvina; in 1804 the Oginsky canal for the connection of the rivers Shara and Yatzolda was opened; in the same year Sivers finished the canal around lake Ilmen, connecting the rivers Msta and Volkhov; the work for the Maryinsky canal was intensified by the great sums offered by Empress Marie Feodorovna (the Dowager), for which reason the canal finished in 1810 has borne her name. At the same time were finished the Svirsky and Siassky canals around lake Ladoga. Among the works of secondary importance one may consider the Mytishchinsky aqueduct in Moscow, which was brought up to the Kuznietzky Bridge (the centre of Moscow) in 1805 at the cost of 1,164,000 rubles.

(their total was 157 million) fell to 70 copecks per ruble; by the end of Paul's reign, when the number of assignations had reached 212 million, the course fell below 50 copecks and threatened to fall further, owing to the mad measures of Paul in regard to foreign trade; but after the revocation of all Paul's restrictions the course began to rise, despite the new yearly issues of assignations, so that in 1803–1804, when their number in circulation exceeded 300 million rubles, their course still stood above 80 copecks per ruble. The war that began in 1805 completely destroyed these favourable financial conditions.

The work of fundamental state reorganisation, that had been planned by Alexander, progressed with a slow tempo after the cessation of the Committee sessions. The discussion of important state affairs and questions was now concentrated in the Committee of Ministers which consisted of all the members of the Committee who had become ministers and deputy-ministers. The working out of further administrative reforms was centred mainly in the Ministry of the Interior, at the head of which stood Kochubey and his deputy Stroganov and the talented young assistant of Troshchinsky, M. M. Speransky, destined to play a prominent rôle in the reorganisation of Russian state-institutions. The views of Speransky on the necessary caution in promulgating fundamental reforms were clearly expressed in a memorandum presented by him in 1803.

"In the present state of affairs," he wrote there, "we do not find the first elements necessary for the establishment of a monarchical order (by monarchical Speransky understood constitutional). Indeed, how is it possible to introduce a monarchical (i.e., constitutional) order after the plan expounded above, in a land where half of the population is in complete slavery, where that slavery is bound with almost all parts of the political organisation and with the military system, and where that system is indispensable in view of the expansion of the frontiers and the political situation? How is it possible to organise

a monarchical state without a code of laws? How is it possible to establish a code of laws without separating the legislative power from the executive? How is it possible to separate the legislative power without an independent institution for its maintenance and support? How introduce such an independent institution without overthrowing the whole existing order of things, with the existence of slavery and in the absence of education? How develop a public opinion, create a national spirit without freedom of the press? How introduce or allow freedom of the press in the absence of education? How establish a real ministerial responsibility where the planning and execution of measures are combined in one person? How can the observance of the laws be secured in the absence of responsibility? How can the laws be observed without education and an abundance of executors? . . ."

All these questions, in Speransky's opinion, had to be solved before granting a constitution. For this reason he insisted that the fundamental reorganisation of the state should be postponed, and the immediate future should be devoted to regulating the existing order. He suggested the following: (1) the autocracy to be preserved for the time being, (2) to strengthen public opinion which should wield an influence on the authorities, (3) to aim at an approach toward a constitutional order, for which purpose the existing order should contain institutions capable of "adapting the national spirit" to the new ideas.

Speransky's considerations resembled in substance those of Stroganov, but they were formulated more practically and categorically. It is characteristic that for Speransky in 1803, as for the members of the Committee, a constitutional order was the fundamental ideal, but an ideal unrealisable in the near future. The chief obstacle to its realisation appeared in the eyes of the most earnest progressives of that period to be the institution of serfdom, but to abolish serfdom was considered dangerous — in the absence of education; and to spread edu-

cation under conditions of serfdom was difficult; hence the enchanted circle, from which they hoped to get out by the way of slow and persistent efforts.

The immediate task was the care for education, to which the whole attention of the Government was directed during the first five years of the nineteenth century. The Ministry of Education produced very effective results. Though at its head stood the lazy Catherinian aristocrat, Count Zavadovsky, he had the co-operation of an entire committee (the Chief Management of Schools) which consisted of enlightened and devoted workers. Some of them were appointed Curators over five educational districts: the Curator of the Moscow district was Michail Muraviov, the former teacher of Alexander (at the same time he remained Deputy-Minister), of the Petrograd district — N. N. Novosiltzev (at the same time Deputy-Minister of Justice), of the Vilna district (to which belonged all Lithuania, White Russia, and the South-Western Region) — Prince Czartoryski (Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs), of the Kharkov district — Count Severin Potocky (the Senator who protested in 1802), of the Kazan district — Academic Rumovsky, one of Lomonosov's favourite pupils, quite senile at the time of his appointment, and finally, of the Dorpat district (Livonia) — the enlightened General Klinger. All the Curators lived in Petrograd, visited their districts from time to time, and took part in collegiate discussions of all problems related to the spread of education in Russia. One of the members of the Chief Management of Schools was Yankovich de Mirievo, the Austrian pedagogue, who had laid a foundation for a net of schools in Russia under Catherine. The secretary of the Management was Vassily Karazin, the young enthusiast whose address of welcome to Alexander immediately after his accession had become the leit-motive of the progressives. South Russia owed to the energy of Karazin the establishment of the university of Kharkov: he induced the Kharkov nobility to col-

lect 400,000 rubles for that purpose, and the university was founded in 1804. At the same time were founded the university of Kazan and the Petrograd Institute of Pedagogy, later reorganised into a university. Thus Russia, up to that time in possession of one university at Moscow, had now six high educational institutions (that of Vilna was Polish, and that of Dorpat — German). The Government actively set out to plant education from above; for most of all there was need of forming a cadre of teachers, for which reason in Petrograd was founded not a university, but an Institute of Pedagogy, divided into departments.

One may judge of the dimensions of the governmental educational activity by comparing the following figures: whereas the highest assignment for education under Catherine reached 780,000 rubles a year, in 1804 there was assigned for the purpose 2,800,000 rubles — an enormous sum, considering the low cost of living at that time and the remuneration of the personnel, which, compared with modern salaries, was negligible. During 1803–1806 the Government assigned sums for the support of educational institutions; each university received 130,000 rubles, each of the 42 gymnasia (not counting those of the districts of Vilna and Dorpat) 5,500–6,500 rubles, and each of the District-Schools (there were 405) — 1250–1600 rubles. Besides the state institutions there were formed during that period by private means the Demidov Lyceum in Yaroslavl and the Gymnasium of Higher Sciences of the Name of Bezborodko in Niezhin.

The first University Statute was issued in 1804. It was based on the principle of respect for knowledge and for freedom of instructions, and gave autonomy to university Councils, which was greatly limited and almost destroyed by the end of Alexander's reign, and entirely abolished by Nicolas I. By the Statute of 1804 the university Councils were placed at the head of all educational institutions of the districts; they en-

joyed full power for spreading and directing education in their districts, while the Curators were not administrators in the proper sense of the word, but dignitaries who lived in Petrograd and represented the needs of each district.

I have already mentioned the generous subsidies of the Government for the publication of books and magazines. To this one should add the pensions that the Government appointed for persons who devoted themselves to the pursuit of knowledge outside of state-service; Karamzin, for instance, received a pension of 2,000 rubles a year, a sum that allowed one at that time to live comfortably and devote oneself entirely to study. On the whole we may consider those years as the best and most productive in the history of Russian education. Unfortunately the government of Alexander I could not long continue in the same way, for first of all there were not sufficient financial resources for the purpose. As soon as in 1805 the war with France broke out, the sums assigned for education, which had been continually increasing up to that time, not only ceased to increase, but were diminished by force of need.

CHAPTER VII

THE next period of Alexander's reign was signified by two wars with Napoleon. The relations, however, which brought the war of 1805 had begun to take form long before that year.

Let us recall that at the moment of Paul's death war with England seemed imminent, and the English fleet was about to bombard Cronstadt. Immediately after Alexander's accession peace was concluded, and the disputable questions of sea-rights which had long impeded the good relations between Russia (and other powers) and England were solved. Although all the sympathies of the youthful Alexander lay on the side of France, he yielded, nevertheless, as we have seen, to the pressure of his close advisors and formed an alliance with England. At the very first sessions of the Committee it was decided in principle not to meddle with any internal affairs of foreign countries, and although they looked with suspicion upon France in view of the ambitious designs of Bonaparte, there prevailed the pacifist principle in foreign relations. Thus Russia was free from foreign entanglements, which was quite in line with Alexander's desire to turn all his attention to internal affairs. This pacifism was not limited to Western Europe alone, but expanded to the Eastern frontier as well, so that when Gruzia, pressed by Persia, appealed to Russia for annexation, the question was decided negatively by the Committee; in view of the insistence of the Permanent Council, however, Alexander had to revise his decision, but he prescribed that all the income from the population of Gruzia should be spent for local needs, and that Gruzia should be

governed according to native customs. Unfortunately the good intentions of the young Tzar did not prevent the Russian representatives in Gruzia — Knorring and Kovalensky — from arousing against Russia the entire public opinion of Gruzia by their revolting abuses and the violence of the first few months of the Russian administration.

The relations with Napoleon, that had been quite favourable at the beginning and were confirmed by a treaty in the fall of 1801, became tense by the end of the same year, partly because of the hostile attitude toward Napoleon taken by the Russian ambassador at Paris, the supercilious Count Morkov, and partly because of Napoleon's resolution to wipe out the king of Sardinia, in defiance of his previous agreement with Alexander on the matter. Besides, Alexander became more and more inclined to think it necessary to curb the ambitions of Bonaparte. At the same time, having grown better acquainted with international relations, and coming in personal contact with foreign representatives at Petrograd (in spite of his friends' efforts to prevent him from doing so), Alexander had evidently discovered in himself — not without foundation — a diplomatic talent and a great predilection for diplomatic negotiations; he was probably attracted by the very technique of diplomatic relations. One may assume that even then he was guided by a vague idea of liberating in the future Europe from the growing despotism and limitless lust for power of Napoleon.

In spite of the warnings of his friends Alexander decided to take an active part in European affairs, and for a beginning he arranged a meeting with the king of Prussia in Memel, in 1802. In the same year he was completely convinced of Napoleon's vulgar aspirations, when after another coup d'état he proclaimed himself Consul for life. "The veil has fallen," wrote Alexander to La Harpe; "Napoleon has deprived himself of the best glory which a mortal may achieve, the glory of proving that he worked disinterestedly for the good of his country, and

remaining loyal to the constitution to which he swore allegiance, after ten years resign his power. Instead he has preferred to emulate monarchical courts, breaking thereby the constitution of his land. Henceforth he is the most prominent of the tyrants that we find in history."

At the same time the rights of the king of Sardinia were absolutely trampled down, and his possessions annexed to France. In 1803, on the renewal of his war with England, Napoleon seized Hanover and ostensibly threatened to become the dictator of the destinies of Central Europe. The personal relations of Napoleon and Count Morkov had become so unpleasant that Napoleon demanded his recall. Alexander did not meet the demand at once, and finally when recalling Morkov he rewarded him demonstratively with the highest Russian order, of Andrey the First Called, in which decoration Morkov appeared to take his leave from Napoleon. Russia did not appoint another ambassador to France, and the temporary management of the embassy's affairs was entrusted to a minor official, Oubri. The proclamation of Napoleon as emperor and the preceding execution of the Duke d'Enghien served as the last causes for a rupture.

From the aforesaid we see that the interests of Russia had in fact nothing to do with the story; in the whole affair Alexander acted not as a representative of Russian interests proper, but as a head of one of the European Powers. Having broken with Napoleon, Alexander became active in forming a coalition against him.

The management of foreign affairs was at that time in the hands of Prince Adam Czartoryski, since the Chancellor, Count A. R. Vorontzov, whom Alexander did not like, had resigned. Czartoryski sympathised with the idea of a coalition against Napoleon, in his hope that as one of the war's results might be the restoration of Poland. He tried to persuade Alexander

that an armed resistance to Napoleon was not sufficient, that in view of his extraordinary genius and prestige of invincibility, it was necessary to arouse in the European nations a strong enthusiasm for a struggle against him. As an idea that might arouse such an enthusiasm Czartoryski put forth the principle of restoring the independence of nationalities. Alexander evidently agreed with such a formulation of the question, although in the mouth of Czartoryski the restoration of the Polish nationality meant the wresting from Russia of such ancient Russian lands as Volhynia and Podolia, for Czartoryski dreamt of Poland before the partition of 1772. At such a formulation of the question the war of 1805 against Napoleon was not only not aroused by Russian interests, but threatened to involve Russia in the future into a new territorial struggle, a struggle which had conditioned in the past centuries her backwardness and darkness. Pretending to share all the views of Czartoryski, Alexander, however, made peculiar use of the hopes of the Polish patriots. He encouraged them, though not binding himself with any definite promises, mainly with the view of compelling the vacillating king of Prussia to join the coalition against Napoleon under the threat of a Polish insurrection in Prussian Poland; as soon as he coerced Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia into signing a treaty with him (it was not carried out after all), he declined to encourage the inflamed hopes of the Poles and indefinitely postponed the solution of the Polish question. By this reckless and incorrect behaviour Alexander aroused a bitter disappointment in the Poles and pushed them into the arms of Napoleon, who made good use of them.

In the war of 1805 Russia had to mobilise a considerable army, for on the Continent only Austrian and Russian troops actually fought against Napoleon. Three consecutive recruitments were required to get 150,000 men (ten recruits from

every thousand males, but since the recruits were taken from among those of the age of twenty to thirty-five, the relation of the number of recruits to the number of that group of the population equalled 10:225). Besides, a new and considerable deficit had to be allowed in the budget, which had to be covered with a new issue of assignations.

Alexander acted in this case as a true autocrat who knew no obstacles to his will and was not responsible before any one. But we should note that Russian public opinion was all against Napoleon, and a war with him did not appear unreasonable, except to a few of his worshippers; Czartoryski's scheme was not generally known, and as to the people — they had been accustomed to bear even heavier burdens.

As it is well known, the war of 1805 ended very badly for Russia and Austria, chiefly because of the stupidity of the Austrian generals, and partly because of the inexperience and self-confidence of Alexander, who forced the chief commander Kutuzov to act against his convictions, but in accordance with the plan of the Austrian theoretic strategist, the doctrinaire Weiroter. After the capitulation of the Austrian army at Ulm and the subsequent defeat of the Russians in the Battle of Austerlitz — which was fought against the will and advice of Kutuzov, the Russian army had to retreat quickly towards the frontier, and the war was at an end. Austria concluded in Presburg a humiliating peace, while Prussia signed an offensive and defensive alliance with Napoleon.

Nevertheless Alexander began to make preparations for the continuation of the war; the defeat of the army created a patriotic mood in society, which Alexander tried to fan by direct appeals to the people. Desiring to reach the masses he employed a strong means, in the form of appeals of the Holy Synod, which were read in all churches. In those appeals Napoleon was declared an enemy of mankind, who intended to proclaim himself a Messiah, and arouse the Jews to annihilate

the Christian Church.[1] Foreseeing the transference of the war into Russian territory, Alexander in addition to the mobilisation of recruits gave orders for calling a militia, which according to the original plan was to consist of 612,000 men. One can imagine the cost of such preparations. They were

[1] "The furious enemy of peace and blessed calm," thus began the proclamation of the Synod, "Napoleon Bonaparte, who wilfully usurped the royal crown of France and by force of arms, but mainly by treachery, has spread his power over numerous neighbourly states and has devastated their towns and villages with fire and sword, dares in the madness of his fury to threaten God protected Russia with an invasion of her territory, with destruction of her well-being which she alone in the whole world enjoys at present under the mild sceptre of by God blessed and by all beloved most pious Tzar Alexander the First, and with shocking the Orthodox Greco-Russian Church in all purity and sanctity blossoming in this Empire. . . ."

After an appeal to all shepherds of the church the Synod continued:

"The whole world knows his Godless intentions and deeds by which he has trampled law and truth.

"Yet in the times of national disturbances that reigned in France during the Godless revolution, disastrous for mankind, which brought down the heavenly curse upon its instigators, he rejected the Christian faith, celebrated in popular assemblies pagan festivities instituted by evil-minded heretics, and in company with evil-doers he paid homage, due only to the Almighty, to statues, human creatures, and whores that served them as idols.

"In Egypt he associated with the persecutors of the Christian Church, preached the Alkoran of Mahomet, proclaimed himself defender of the creed of the followers of that false prophet, and solemnly demonstrated his contempt for the shepherds of the Holy Church of Christ.

"Finally to the greater shame of France he assembled there Jewish synagogues, ordered to pay honour to the Rabbins, and established a new great Jewish Synedrion, that same Godless congregation which once dared condemn to crucifixion our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and now he attempts to unite the Jews scattered by Divine wrath over the whole earth, and to direct them for the overthrow of Christ's Church and for (O horrible impudence overstepping all his wickedness!) the proclamation of a false Messiah in the person of Napoleon. . . ."

After various vigorous curses and threats borrowed from the book of Deuteronomy, the proclamation reiterated in the end:

accompanied, especially in the western provinces, with the tax of carts by means of which munitions and provisions were brought to the front.

Although Prussia soon after the first treaty concluded a second with Napoleon, Alexander did not lose hope of arousing her against Bonaparte, who kept his army on German territory, refused to evacuate, and at the same time did not give his consent to the formation by the king of Prussia of a North-German union out of the states that were not included in the Rhenish Confederation. Prussia's rupture with Napoleon did take place, and sooner than Alexander had expected it. The weak Friedrich Wilhelm hesitated a long time, then suddenly sent an ultimatum to Napoleon, demanding the immediate evacuation of the French army and his non-interference in the organisation of the North-German union. All this happened so unexpectedly that Alexander did not have time for bringing his army to Prussia's aid. Napoleon gave no answer to the ultimatum, but began at once military activities, and after eight days delivered Prussia a terrible defeat at Jena. The main Prussian army was destroyed there, and after their second defeat at Auerstaedt almost all Prussia was occupied by the French. The Prussians held only two fortresses in the north-eastern corner of the kingdom — Danzig and Koenigsberg — behind which Friedrich Wilhelm had to seek refuge, in the little

"Having rejected the thought of God's judgement, Napoleon in his madness dreams about appropriating (the thought of which is horrible!) the holy name of Messiah with the aid of the enemies of Christ, the Jews; show him that he is a creature consumed by conscience and deserving scorn. . . ." In the same tone was the proclamation by the Catholic Metropolitan of Mohilev, Sestrentzevich, sent out to the Catholic priests of the western provinces. The local administration in western Russia was ordered to watch the Jews from communicating with the Paris Synedrion, and the Jews were persuaded that the Synedrion attempted to change their religion. It is curious that in 1812 the Jews of the western provinces remained absolutely loyal to Russia, in spite of all apprehensions.

town of Memel on the Niemen, on the very frontier of Russia. Poland had become the zone of the war, and Napoleon, wishing to counterpoise his own intentions to the hopes of the Poles in Alexander, made clever use of their disappointment caused by the treachery of 1805, and began to spread rumours that he would restore Poland as a bulwark against Russia.

The commander of the Russian army was the old Field-marshal Kamensky, who lost his reason immediately after his arrival at headquarters, and almost destroyed the army by his senseless orders; happily he withdrew voluntarily after one week, leaving an order to retreat with the utmost rapidity. The generals, however, decided to disobey him, and Benigsen concentrated the army at one point and successfully repulsed the French advance-guard under Pultusk, fifty versts from Warsaw, east of the Vistula. Benigsen was appointed commander-in-chief. In the battle of Eylau that followed soon, despite the loss of 50,000 men on both sides, both the French and the Russian armies retained their positions; the fact that a battle with such an opponent as Napoleon was not lost greatly uplifted the spirit of Benigsen's army. But five months after Napoleon decidedly defeated the Russian army at Friedland, with a loss of 15,000 men, after which the Russians could not continue the war. There was no hope of reinforcements, except for one division of infantry under Prince Lobanov-Rostovsky, which consisted entirely of fresh recruits; in the meantime war was declared against Turkey, and a part of the army had to withdraw to assist Michelson's army which had occupied Moldavia and Wallachia. As to the militia, in spite of its great numbers it proved quite useless; it might give great resistance in case of the enemy's invasion of Russia, in a guerrilla-war, but for the regular army the untrained and poorly armed militiamen were of no use.[2] It was particularly difficult to fill

[2] Bogdanovich states that only one-fifth of the militiamen could be equipped with rifles; the rest were to be armed with pikes. After

the enormous loss of officers and generals; of the latter there remained a very few good ones, and as to officers there had always been a dearth of them, so that their ranks had to be filled with unprepared students or with mere " fledglings " from among the nobility who consented to go through some instruction in the Cadet-Corpuses. Thus Russia was unable to continue the war alone; England took part in it only by subsidies, and even those were not too large — 2,200,000 pounds a year for all her continental allies. Alexander was forced to start peace negotiations in which he was met half way by Napoleon, who was also in great difficulties after the bloody battles of Eylau and Friedland.

The two emperors met at Tilsit, on the Niemen. There Alexander demonstrated for the first time his remarkable diplomatic talent, since Napoleon suggested carrying on the negotiations without the participation of their ministers, to which Alexander willingly consented. He had to employ strenuous efforts to dissuade Napoleon from completely annihilating Prussia. Still Prussia suffered unprecedented humiliation; she lost half of her territory, and from a Great Power was reduced temporarily to a dependency of Napoleon, with the right to maintain an army of not more than 42,000 soldiers, while the fortresses she retained were occupied by the French (until the payment of the war-contribution).

During the Tilsit negotiations Napoleon took into account no one except Alexander, with whom he intended to share for

the Pultusk battle Alexander ordered the militia decreased to 252 thousand. Roustam in his memoirs published in *Revue Retrospective* brings out the following fact: After the disorderly retreat of the Russians from the battle-field of Friedland, the French having reached the Niemen at Tilsit saw a quaint sight: "A horde of barbarians with Asiatic faces, Kalmucks and Siberians (?), without rifles, ran about the plain, shooting arrows and trying in vain to frighten us. This was the reserve-army under Prince Lobanov, of which Russia had boastfully announced to the world."

the time being the domination of the world. Alexander, seeing the impossibility of an immediate continuation of the struggle, decided to meet temporarily the desires of his rival, who offered quite honourable conditions of peace. But as the *conditio sine qua non* of the peace Napoleon demanded that in case of England's refusal to accept his conditions — and that she would not accept them was beyond doubt — Alexander had to declare war against her, and at the same time to accept the famous Continental System, which forbade Napoleon's allied and dependent countries of Europe to have any trade relations with England, or to admit to their ports English vessels. Besides this, Alexander obligated himself to compel Sweden and Denmark to break with England and enter the Continental System; one could have foreseen that Sweden, being absolutely defenceless from the attack of England, would not consent, and, moreover, King Gustave IV had manifested a fanatical hatred for Napoleon. Thus one could have foretold even then the inevitability of a joined attack of England and Sweden against Russia both from sea and land in the vicinity of Petrograd. The northern shore of the Gulf of Finland belonged at that time to Sweden, and Napoleon pointed out to Alexander the strategic necessity for its conquest. In Tilsit, then, was planned the annexation of Finland to Russia, for which the latter had to carry on for two years a difficult war with Sweden.

In regard to Turkey Napoleon offered his mediation for a conclusion of peace on conditions favourable for Russia, and in a verbal agreement he promised to uphold Alexander even unto the partition of European Turkey, should the latter refuse to surrender the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia; but as a preliminary condition for an armistice and for beginning peace negotiations Napoleon required the evacuation of the principalities by the Russian army, with the understanding that they were not to be occupied by the Turks either. In fact

the war with Turkey did not cease, and although Napoleon continued to tempt Alexander with brilliant prospects of driving out the Turk from Europe and of undertaking a joint invasion of India, Russia had to carry on a fruitless war with Turkey until 1812.

Napoleon's intrigues and undertakings in regard to the Poles did Russia considerable harm; he refused to return to Prussia the conquered Polish districts, and formed out of them the Grand Duchy of Warsaw under the rule of the king of Saxony and under the protectorate of the French emperor. Thus Napoleon established a military post on the Russian frontier.[3] At the same time he placed Alexander in a difficult situation concerning the Poles, as he was forced to act in contradiction to his former declarations, and oppose the restoration of an independent Poland. This circumstance brought the final disappointment of the Poles in Alexander, and transferred all their hopes to Napoleon.

In Tilsit and after Tilsit Alexander manifested his admiration for the genius of Napoleon and his friendship with him. His contemporaries reproached him in having been hoodwinked by the sly Corsican who failed to fulfil many of his promises. But in fact Alexander was not infatuated with Napoleon; he skilfully played his part both in Tilsit and later in Erfurt, so that Napoleon called him later "the Talma of the North" (Talma was a well-known dramatic actor at that time) and "a Byzantine Greek."

It is difficult to say who was more deceived in that diplomatic tournament, for Napoleon's advisors told him later more than once that he was deceived by Alexander. From the point

[3] Napoleon's adorer, Albert Vandal, in his work "Napoleon and Alexander I" speaks on this matter: "Not intending to augment the victim of the triple partition into a strong power, he wishes to create in Europe — I do not say a Polish nation — but a Polish army, since he considers the projected state only as a big military force on the guard of France" (! — on the shores of the Vistula).

of view of the international relations of that time, and considering the actual conditions of the moment, we must admit that Alexander's policy in Tilsit and a year later in Erfurt was very clever. In those negotiations Alexander appeared for the first time in the rôle of a keen and far-seeing diplomat, and we may now presume that diplomacy was his real sphere, where he was able to cope with the most prominent statesmen of Europe.

The influence of those wars on the conditions of the population was grave. We have spoken about the burdens of recruitments, calling of militia, transportation of provision, etc. Of great importance was also the cessation of the Government's legislative activity on account of the war. Finally the disastrous state of the finances under the influence of the war-expenditures had greatly affected the Government's plans in the field of popular education which had so well advanced until then. As a consequence of the wars of 1805–7 and of the complete failure of crops in 1806, the financial conditions grew worse from year to year. In 1806 the income and the expenditures were 100 million and 122 million, in 1807 — 121 and 171 million, in 1808 — 111.5 million and 240 million, of which 140 million were spent on the army. The enormous deficits were again covered by new paper-issues, the total of which amounted in 1806 to 319 million rubles, in 1807 to 382 million, in 1808 to 477 million rubles. In the meantime foreign trade, under the influence of the war, and later of the Continental System and of the prohibition of exporting grain from the western provinces on account of the crop-failure of 1806, had diminished considerably; the export of raw material had suffered especially, and this caused an unfavourable turn in the balance of trade, hence an outflow of metal-money, to the further fall of the course of the paper-money. The paper-ruble, quite firm from 1802 to 1805, now began to depreciate rapidly: in 1806 its value fell to seventy-eight copecks, in

1807 — to sixty-six, in 1808 — to forty-eight copecks. In the meantime taxes were paid in assignations, while a considerable portion of the state-expenses (for the maintenance of the army and for subsidies to the ruined king of Prussia) had to be paid in metal-money. The situation was difficult, and after the Peace of Tilsit and the acceptance of the Continental System it became unbearable. The Treaty of Tilsit had a depressing effect on all parts of Russian society and the masses; many considered it more ignominious than all the lost battles. Alexander's popularity was greatly dimmed after his peace with Napoleon. The people who not long before had heard in the churches anathemas hurled at Napoleon, could not understand how the Russian tzar so demonstratively showed his friendship for the "enemy of mankind" who had schemed to annihilate Christianity.

The dissatisfaction became general when the Continental System had completely destroyed the export trade, brought many firms to bankruptcy, ruined many estates that used to send raw material abroad (particularly flax and hemp in various forms), and raised the cost of living.[4] According to his contemporaries Alexander's unpleasant and difficult rôle in his relations with Napoleon began to affect his temper; his customary politeness and evenness was supplanted by an irritable and often gloomy mood, while his natural obstinacy was manifested in a quite disagreeable form. It is noteworthy that already in 1805, leaving for the war, Alexander confidentially ordered the secret-police system restored, by establishing a special temporary committee of three persons for the surveillance of public opinion. After the Treaty of Tilsit he made the committee official and permanent, and by a secret instruction gave it the right of mail-

[4] Especially the prices of colonial wares that had been imported up to that time from England rose tremendously. In 1808 a pud (a little over thirty-six pounds) of sugar was priced in Petrograd at one hundred rubles.

perlustration and other means of police supervision which during the first years of his reign he had abhorred.

At the head of those who opposed Alexander's "friendship" with Napoleon was the Dowager Empress Marie; Alexander had to play his part without being able to reveal his real intentions to any one. His closest friends — Kochubey, Czartoryski, Novosiltzev — resigned, and the last two went abroad, while Stroganov entered the army in order not to meddle with politics. Even his court-marshal, Count N. A. Tolstoy, expressed his disapproval of Alexander's friendship with Napoleon by refusing to wear alongside with the ribbon of the Legion of Honour given to him by the French emperor the ribbon of the highest Russian order — of Andrey the First Called — which Alexander wished to bestow upon him. The opposition of the higher circles of Petrograd society was most strongly manifested when there arrived Napoleon's military agent, General Savary, who had been personally connected with the execution of the Duke d'Enghien. The Petrograd salons shut their doors to him; he was received nowhere outside of the Winter Palace, and nobody called on him, until Alexander personally interceded and demanded from the courtiers a politer treatment of his ally's representative. Savary, eventually Napoleon's Minister of Police, decided to employ his police-talent right then and there. He carefully collected and fabricated all sorts of gossip and careless phrases dropped by persons dissatisfied with Alexander's policy, and even invented a story about a gigantic plot and attempted coup d'état, all of which he tried to communicate to the Tzar in his endeavour to bring friction between him and the public, and to fan the mutual mistrust that began to appear at that period between the young ruler and his subjects.[5]

[5] It is curious that other foreign diplomats in Petrograd (e.g., Baron Steding) and Canning in London (in his conversation with the Russian ambassador, Alopeus) repeated alarming rumours about

In wider circles dissatisfaction appeared in stronger forms, was expressed in literature and in theatres where the audience applauded vehemently patriotic passages and places that derided or attacked the French. Still stronger was the opposition in Moscow where the ardent patriot, S. N. Glinka, began to publish an anti-Napoleonic magazine, the *Russian Messenger.* Between the meetings at Tilsit and Erfurt, the very period when Alexander displayed before the world his friendship for Napoleon, Glinka wrote that the Peace of Tilsit was only a temporary armistice, that during the inevitable next war the Russians would strain all their efforts to repulse the power-fiend, Napoleon. The French ambassador called the attention of the Tzar to those writings, and as a result the patriot and conservative Glinka was the first to suffer from censorship-persecutions during Alexander's reign. About the same time Count Rastopchin, one of Paul's dignitaries, issued in Moscow a pamphlet under a pseudonym, in which the same ideas were put in a popular form, to attract the masses. In Petrograd Admiral Shishkov, an Old Believer, founded a patriotic literary society "Discourse," to which belonged Old Believers, conservatives like Derzhavin and Karamzin, and even liberals like Mordvinov.

It is worth noting that this opposition which had united quite broad circles and was so patriotic bore by no means a chauvinistic character. It was directed solely against Napoleon and the Tilsit Treaty with its disastrous effects on Russian trade, industry, and public life. Russia carried on four wars at that time, and in every case society remained quite indifferent, even hostile to the success of the Government's plans. Two of those wars (with weak Persia and with Austria; against the latter Alexander fought *à contre cœur* as an ally of Napoleon) [6]

attempted plots and revolutions in Petrograd. It is quite possible that those were results of Savary's intrigues and inventions.

[6] In 1809 after the Erfurt meeting, when Alexander saw the futility of his efforts to keep Austria from war with France in which he had

were comparatively easy, although they had also required considerable expenditures. But the other two wars were difficult and demanded enormous quantities of money and men. The war with Turkey continued with interruptions but with no peace conclusion from 1806 till the spring of 1812; the war with Sweden came after the Tilsit Treaty as a direct result of it, and after heroic heavy fighting it ended in 1809 with the conquest of Finland as far as the river Torneo.

Alexander determined to attract the hearts of his new subjects by magnanimity, and even before the conclusion of peace he summoned the Diet in Borgo and affirmed in a special charter the ancient rights and privileges of the Finnish population. Thus the legal conditions of Finland did not grow worse after the annexation, while the economic conditions of the province even improved at first, owing to the abolition of the tax which Finland had to pay for the extinction of the Swedish debt, and the abrogation of internal custom-houses.

But the Russian public disapproved of the peace of Friedrichsham, and there were even expressed condolences for Sweden. The war with Turkey also aroused opposition. In 1810 Mordvinov presented a memorandum in which he proved the uselessness of territorial acquisitions for Russia, whose frontiers were already too extended, and insisted on the necessity of an immediate cessation of the war with Turkey.

Such was the mood of the public after the Treaty of Tilsit.

formally agreed to aid Napoleon, said to the Austrian ambassador, Prince Schwarzenberg: ". . . My position is so strange that although we stand on opposite sides I cannot help wishing you success! . . ." The Russian public in 1809 openly rejoiced at every victory of their "enemies," the Austrians, and at every defeat of their "ally," Napoleon. (In the "Memoirs" of Wiegel, a contemporary of very moderate views.)

CHAPTER VIII

ALEXANDER was troubled by the general dissatisfaction of the people after the Treaty of Tilsit. He understood that the public mood could not be altered by police measures, and decided to regain the common goodwill by a nobler and more reasonable means — by returning to the work of internal reforms which had begun so promisingly at his accession. This time his chief co-operator came to be a new statesman, Mikhail Speransky, by intellect and talent undoubtedly the greatest man of Alexander's epoch, and perhaps the most remarkable statesman in all modern Russian history.

A son of a village-priest and a student of a theological Seminary, Speransky succeeded without any protection in rising to a prominent position, and acquiring a thorough knowledge of the best French political, economic, and juridical works. In four years he rose from a private secretaryship to Prince Kurakin to the rank of Imperial State-Secretary. The ministers Troshchinsky and Kochubey fought for Speransky, each desiring to have him in his department.

I have already mentioned Speransky's memorandum worked out by the request of Kochubey in 1803. Practically the same principles were laid as a basis for his famous plan for the reorganisation of the state, although, as we shall see, under the influence of his journey abroad (in 1808 to Erfurt) and in connection with Alexander's mood, Speransky's views had become more optimistic in regard to the readiness of the country for a constitutional order.

Although Alexander gave up his plan for an immediate constitutional reorganisation in 1802, he continued to keep others

occupied with the idea. In 1804 he commissioned for this purpose Baron Rosenkampf who, by the way, knew no Russian at that time. His plan, called "Constitutional Cadre," was then handed over to Novosiltzev and Czartoryski, but in view of the war that broke out in 1805 the plan lay motionless until 1808, when among other materials it was brought before Speransky who received after his return from Erfurt an order from Alexander to work out a general plan for the reorganisation of the state. Korf relates, and Schilder repeats an anecdote about a conversation that supposedly took place between Alexander and Speransky in Erfurt, where Speransky became acquainted with Talleyrand and other notables of Napoleon's entourage. Alexander asked Speransky about his impression of Europe, and Speransky is alleged to have answered: "We have better men, but they have better institutions." Alexander agreed with him and added: "On our return we shall discuss the matter." In direct connection with this conversation they place the new reform-activity of 1809.

I hardly believe that the conversation took place. In Prussia there was no constitution at that time; her entire structure lay in ruins, and the Prussians had a task of building it up anew; in France there was only a ghost of a constitution, and all her "constitutional" institutions bore a charlatanic character. Alexander and Speransky knew it quite well, and we can hardly ascribe to Speransky the expression "We have better men, but they have better institutions"; besides he had no reason to give such a flattering opinion about the Russian men of affairs. It is much more probable to assume that Alexander intended to win back the lost sympathy of the people by way of renewing his former activity for the improvement of internal conditions. It is important to note the change in Speransky's own views since 1803: then he considered the radical reorganisation of the state unrealisable, while now he regarded it as quite feasible. This change could perhaps have occurred under

the influence of his conversations with Talleyrand and others, and particularly under the influence of Alexander's new mood. Later, in his defence-letter from Perm, Speransky emphasised the fact that the fundamental idea about the reorganisation of the state had been given to him by Alexander himself.

In his "Plan," in the chapter on "The wisdom of state laws" Speransky discussed in detail the question of the timeliness of a radical reconstruction of the state. He observed that while in the West constitutions were wrested in "chunks" after cruel revolutions, the Russian constitution would owe its existence to the beneficial grace of the supreme authority, which consequently had the right to choose the proper time and forms for the reform. He examined the "timeliness" of the moment, and let himself dwell at length on historical-political investigations; he reduced all the existing political systems to three main forms: republic, feudal monarchy, and despoty. The Western European states since the crusades had gone through a process of struggle in the result of which the feudal form yielded more and more to the republican. As to Russia Speransky considered that she had already emerged from the purely feudal forms, since all her portions had been united under a single power. Regarding the constitutional attempts at the accession of Anna Joannovna and under Catherine II as "untimely," Speransky thought the present moment opportune for such a reform, in contradiction to his view in 1803. The presence of serfdom did no longer trouble him, for he considered a constitutional structure co-existable with unequal rights. For this reason his plan was based on a system of different class-rights, the distinct right of the nobility being the possession of bondage-estates. Thus the bondage-right appeared as one of the essential elements of the reorganised order. Political rights he allowed only for those citizens who had property.

Speransky considered as important preparatory steps for intro-

ducing the preparatory constitution, the permission for all classes to buy land, the establishment of the class of Free Agriculturists, the law concerning the Lifland peasants, and the founding of responsible ministries (though he knew well the value of that responsibility, as we have seen). Of more importance is Speransky's admission of the significance of public opinion. As symptoms of the ripeness of the moment he recognised the disappearance of respect for ranks, orders, and other external signs of authority, the fall of the moral prestige of the authorities, the growing spirit of criticism in regard to the Government's activity. He observed that under such conditions it would be impossible to promulgate partial improvements of the existing system, and came to the conclusion that the moment had arrived for a change of the old order of things. These considerations of Speransky, approved by Alexander himself, are of great value for us; they testify to the consciousness of the Government that there had developed elements intent to participate in the management of the state.

Speransky recommended two ways out of the situation: one insincere, fictitious, and another, sincere,— a radical way. The first consisted in lending the autocracy an external form of legality, leaving its essential power intact; the other way recommended "not only to conceal the autocracy behind external forms, but to limit it by an intrinsic and substantial force of statutes, and to base the ruling power on law not only in words but in very deed." Speransky insisted that at the very approach to carrying out the reforms they had to choose definitely one way or the other. For the fictitious reform use could be made of institutions which, possessing an apparent freedom of legislative power, would in fact remain under the influence and complete dependence of the autocracy. At the same time the executive power could be so instituted that "by the *wording* of the law it would bear responsibility, but by its *sense* it would be absolutely independent." The judicial power would be given all

advantage of *visible* freedom, but *in essence* it would be always subject to the autocracy. As an example of such a fictitious-constitutional state Speransky pointed out Napoleon's France.

If, on the contrary, the second alternative was to be chosen, the appearance of the state-structure would be entirely different. In the first place the legislative institutions would in that case have to be so built that although they could not carry through their enactments without the confirmation of the Monarch, yet their judgments would be free and really express the popular opinion; in the second place the judicial department would have to be so formed that its existence would be based on free election, and the Government would only supervise the fulfilment of its decisions; in the third place the executive power would have to be responsible before the legislative power.

"Comparing these two systems," explained Speransky, "we can see beyond doubt that the first has only an appearance of law, while the second is its very essence; the first — under the pretence of a single authority — introduces complete absolutism, while the second seeks indeed to limit and moderate it. . . ."

Thus the question was put so clearly and straight that Alexander was unable to proceed with his customary dreamy indefiniteness, and he had to make a serious choice. He chose the second system. Speransky worked out a corresponding plan of reorganisation, and after two months of almost daily discussion between the two Alexander ordered in the fall of 1809 the beginning of its realisation.

According to the Plan the fundamental territorial units were based on the administrative division of the country, i.e., provinces were subdivided into districts, and districts into *volosts*. Each *volost* was to have a *Volost Duma* composed of delegates from Fiscal peasants (one from five hundred) and of private landowners. The *Duma* would be renewed once in three years. The chief objects of the *Volost Duma* would be (1) the election of officers for the *volost* administration, (2) the control

of the *volost* income and expenditures, (3) the election of delegates for the District-*Duma,* (4) the presentation of *volost*-needs before the District-*Duma.* The District-*Duma* was to consist of delegates elected by the *Volost-Dumas;* its jurisdiction corresponded with that of the *Volost-Duma,* but it concerned the affairs of the district; it elected delegates to the Provincial *Duma,* the District-Court, and the District-Council. The Provincial *Duma* was proposed to have an analogous jurisdiction, and to send delegates to the State-*Duma* which was to assemble every year in Petrograd. According to Speransky's plan the sessions of the State-*Duma* could be postponed by the Monarch for one year; but its prorogation could take place only upon the election of delegates for the next *Duma.* The chairman of the State-*Duma* was to be the State-Chancellor, i.e., an appointed person; the work was to be performed by commissions. The right of legislative initiative was to belong exclusively to the Monarch, with the exception of presentations about national needs, about the responsibility of officials, and about decrees that might infringe upon the fundamental state-laws. The Senate was to become the supreme court and consist of life-members to be elected by the Provincial *Dumas* and confirmed by the Monarch.[1]

Above the State-*Duma* the Plan proposed to institute the State Council out of the highest dignitaries selected by the Monarch, which was to be not a second legislative chamber, as it is at present, but an advisory institution under the Monarch for the discussion of new projects presented by the ministers and of proposed financial measures before bringing them to the State-*Duma.*

Such were the general features of Speransky's plan approved in principle by Alexander. We shall not discuss its weak sides, for it was not put into practice. Alexander admitted its de-

[1] Compare Speransky's Plan with the Duma-statutes of Nicolas II, in the supplementary chapters to volume two.— TR.

sirability and usefulness, but he decided to introduce it only in parts. At first was published the new statute about the ministries and the State Council as an advisory institution. The State Council did not receive its preparatory character as originally designed by Speransky, which could take place only after the realisation of the whole Plan; it was divided into four departments — the department of civil and church affairs, the departments of laws, of war, and of national economy. Each department had at its head a state-secretary. Speransky was appointed Imperial Secretary; in his hands were concentrated besides the matters of the State Council all the threads of the reform-measures and of the whole legislative activity.

The project of the State Council was shown before its publication to several influential dignitaries, such as Zavodovsky, Lopukhin, Kochubey, and others, and all of them approved it, not knowing the ultimate purpose of Speransky with regard to the rôle of the State Council. But despite Speransky's efforts to remain outside of any parties, there was formed against him a strong opposition among the officials, nobles, and courtiers. The hostility was aggravated after the issue of two ukases, April 3, and August 6, 1809 — which were credited to Speransky's influence. The first ukase prescribed that all persons with court-titles chose some state-service; thenceforward court-titles were considered only as honourable distinctions and gave no service-rights. The other ukase, with a view of improving the personnel, required that the titles of Collegiate Assessor and Councillor of State were given only to those who had passed a certain examination and had presented a university diploma.

The bureaucratic and court-circles were indignant about those ukases, and they began a campaign of intrigue against Speransky, finally succeeding in overthrowing that remarkable statesman. The nobles blamed him for the deplorable state of the finances, which was due, of course, not to Speransky's

policy, but to the growing budgets and increasing paper-issues connected with the results of the Continental System.

I have said that after the Treaty of Tilsit in 1808 the income of the state equalled one hundred and eleven million rubles in assignations or about fifty millions in silver, while the expenses reached two hundred and forty-eight million rubles in assignations. The deficit was covered by a new issue of assignations the course of which in that year was below fifty copecks per ruble, and during the summer months it fell below forty copecks. In the next year, 1809, the course in the average did not exceed forty copecks, and by the end of the year it descended to thirty-five copecks; the income of that year equalled one hundred and ninety-five million rubles in assignations (less than eighty million in silver), and the expenses — two hundred and seventy-eight million rubles in assignations (about one hundred and fourteen million in silver). The deficit was again covered by a new issue of assignations, but they had no circulation; the market refused to accept such a quantity of paper-money. Toward the end of 1810 their course fell below twenty copecks. The country faced bankruptcy. In this difficult situation Alexander turned to Speransky in 1809.

We have seen the influence of the limitation of the market and of the diminished trade-turnover on the fall of the course of the paper-money. The limitation of the market was conditioned by the Continental System which stopped the export of flax and hemp to England, which formed then about half of the Russian export trade. At the same time the custom tariff was very unfavourable for the development of the big industries, since in view of the insignificant duties on foreign commodities the Russian manufacturers could not compete with the foreigners. Besides, owing to the prevalence of import over export, the balance of trade was very unfavourable: Russia had to pay for the imported commodities with metal-money, while the small export brought an insignificant sum of metal-money.

Hence there was an enormous outflow of money abroad, and at home remained only assignations which continually depreciated. Then, the Russian court gave big subsidies to the king of Prussia. Finally Russia carried on four wars during those years: a long war with Persia (from 1804 to 1813); with Turkey the war spasmodically fell and rose for six years (from 1806 to 1812); the war with Sweden, which ended with the annexation of Finland (1808–1809); finally by virtue of her alliance with Napoleon Russia had to take part in the war against Austria (1809). True the last war was a bloodless farce (by orders from above the Russian troops evaded the Austrians), yet it cost considerable money.

These causes — the unfavourable balance of trade and the necessity of maintaining an army abroad on metal-money — were responsible for the difficult conditions of the treasury.

Nominally the budget increased from year to year, but in fact it constantly fell. For instance, the maintenance of the court in 1803 cost eight million six hundred thousand rubles, or in silver — seven million eight hundred thousand rubles; in 1810 the expenses of the court equalled fourteen million five hundred thousand rubles in assignations, but in silver it amounted only to four million two hundred thousand rubles; thus the actual budget of the court decreased in those years by forty-five per cent. Below are the figures of the budget of the Ministry of Popular Education (in millions of rubles):

Years	*In assignations:*	*In silver:*
1804	2.8	2.3
1809	3.6	1.144
1810	2.5	0.727

Thus the budget of the Ministry of Education had diminished almost four times in six years. Under such circumstances there could be no question about opening new schools: even the old ones could scarcely exist, and that only by way of paying

the teachers in assignations, as all officials were paid then; imagine their position when the cost of all commodities increased four times, and some (colonial wares) even considerably more!

The national treasury faced a collapse, and the country grew alarmed and dissatisfied. It was then that Speransky, who had just finished his plan for the general reorganisation of the state, received the order of the Tzar to take up immediately the financial question. Speransky had long ago become interested in financial affairs, and now he made a thorough study of them with the aid of the young scholars, Professors Balugiansky and Jacob, who had been recently invited from abroad. Soon he presented an exhaustive memorandum on the state of finances and on the necessary improvements, which he submitted for a preliminary discussion to an unofficial assembly of all those statesmen who had some financial knowledge. Among them were Count Severin Potocky, Admiral Mordvinov, Kochubey, State-Comptroller Kampfenhausen, and Speransky's close assistant, Balugiansky.

Towards the first of January, 1810 — the opening of the State-Council — Speransky presented to Alexander a complete plan for a financial reorganisation, the essence of which consisted in the finding of measures for making the state income correspond with the state expenditures. Since the fiscal income had actually decreased owing to the fall of the course of paper-money, Speransky proposed first of all to discontinue the further issue of assignations, to recognise those already issued as a state-debt, and to take steps for the gradual extinction of that debt by way of redemption. He offered the following measures for getting the necessary means: (1) to decrease the deficit by cutting the current expenses, even for such useful needs as popular education, improving ways of communication, and so forth; (2) to introduce a new tax for the exclusive purpose of extinguishing the national debt; (3) to make an in-

ternal loan under the pledge of state-property; a part of the state-property he even proposed to sell. He asserted that such a loan, made for a certain length of time and secured by definite property, would not play the rôle of an assignation loan. But as all those measures were not sufficient, the more so since the wars with Turkey and Persia still continued, Speransky proposed a special tax of fifty copecks from every soul on the landowners' and state-estates, for one year only. In general he claimed that deficits should be covered as much as possible by percentage additions to the existing taxes, so that the people could immediately cover the current deficits without leaving their burdens for the coming generations. For the improvement of credit-conditions and the regularisation of political economy Speransky proposed to introduce regulated reports and publicity in the management of national economy. The last reform was carried through only as late as in the sixties. Seeing one of the main reasons for the fall of the paper-course in the unfavourable balance of trade, Speransky, with the energetic support of Mordvinov, president of the department of national economy, insisted on the revision of the custom tariff. He argued that the conditions accepted in Tilsit concerning the Continental System should be interpreted in a limited sense, since Napoleon had intended to ruin England, not Russia, whereas the contrary was the result. In accordance with the suggestion of Speransky and Mordvinov it was decreed in 1810 that all Russian ports were free for vessels under neutral flags, regardless of whose goods they carried. On the other hand, by the new tariff of 1810 the import of luxuries was forbidden, and high duties were placed on other foreign manufactures; that tariff was to decrease the import, while the opening of the ports at once renewed the export of raw materials and certain manufacturers (flax and hemp cloth) to England, whose ships were not long in arriving under the Teneriffe flag. Both these circumstances brought about a very favourable balance of trade

for Russia, and if Speransky's plan had been followed in toto, the course of the paper ruble would undoubtedly have risen. Unfortunately in 1810 were issued new assignations for the sum of forty-three million rubles. Although that issue was made on the basis of a previous decree it nevertheless fundamentally destroyed all Speransky's measures and the confidence of the public, so that the course continued to fall: during 1811 it never rose above twenty-three copecks, while at certain months it fell below twenty copecks. But the tariff played an enormous rôle in the economic life of the country; one may say that it had saved Russia from complete ruination. Yet the measures that were taken by the State Council not only did not bring Speransky the gratitude of his contemporaries, but even enhanced the hatred of wide circles of nobles and officials for him.

The conclusions which the public had drawn from Speransky's financial plans were quite discouraging. It had become clear (1) that the condition of the finances was deplorable, (2) that the treasury had been involved in considerable internal loans (it was news for many, since few had understood before that the issues of assignations were equivalent to loans), and (3) that there were no means for the ordinary expenditures in 1810, in view of which new taxes and loans had to be applied. The last conclusion was the most disagreeable, as the position of the tax-payers, especially of the landowners, was unenviable even if no new burdens had been lain upon them. This dissatisfaction was stupidly directed not against those who had caused the financial ruin, but against the one who had opened the eyes of the public to the real state of affairs. The irritation of the nobles at the new taxes on their estates grew more bitter when it appeared that in spite of all burdens the course of the assignations continued falling. The tax that had been intended for the extinction of the debt was used for current expenses which increased greatly

in view of the expected war with Napoleon, so that the public had a plausible reason for accusing the State Council and the author of its plan in having simply deceived them.

As I said, Speransky was blamed for the failure of his plan, the carrying out of which fell into the hands of the inefficient Minister of Finances, Guriev; there were even rumours that Speransky had invented his plan with the purpose of irritating the opposition, and that he was in criminal relations with Napoleon. Alexander was unable to hold out against the attack of Speransky's enemies. He deemed it necessary at that time to raise the patriotic sentiment of the people, regardless of the form in which it was expressed, for he hoped to repulse Napoleon only in case the war had a popular character; he saw no way of entering into explanations and decided to sacrifice his best co-operator to the wrath of the privileged mob. In March of 1812 Speransky was discharged and exiled to Nizhni-Novgorod, and later on the basis of a new insinuation, to Perm, although Alexander could not have doubted that Speransky had committed no serious crime. His only guilt consisted in having received through a certain official copies of all important secret papers of the Ministry of Foregin Affairs, which in his position he could have easily received by getting the Tzar's permission.

The hatred of the public for Speransky had found a strong expression in the famous memorandum of Karamzin "On ancient and modern Russia," which was presented to Alexander through the Grand Duchess Catherine Paulovna. In it Karamzin gave a brief picturesque sketch of Russian history, praised Catherine II to heaven, spared no dark colours for the reign of Paul, as we have seen already, and vigorously condemned the reforms of Alexander. "Russia is seething with dissatisfaction," he wrote, "they grumble in palaces and in huts; there is no confidence, no loyalty to the Government; its aims and measures are severely condemned. An astonishing phe-

nomenon! It is customary for a successor of a cruel monarch to gain general approval upon mitigating his predecessor's régime; how explain the deplorable state of minds among the people pacified by Alexander's mildness, enjoying all civil rights, fearing neither the Secret Chancery nor Siberia? — By the unfortunate circumstances in Europe, and by the important, in my opinion, mistakes of the Government; for even with good intentions one may err in the means for bringing happiness. . . ."

The main fallacy of Alexander's inexperienced law-givers, according to Karamzin, consisted in their undertaking organic reforms instead of perfecting Catherine's institutions. Karamzin had no mercy for the State Council or for the new ministries, or even for the educational measures of the government, which he had praised some time before in his *European Messenger*. In place of all reforms he recommended the appointment of fifty good governors and the securing for the people of adequate spiritual shepherds. In regard to the ministerial responsibility he wrote: "Who selects the ministers? — The Tzar. Then let him reward the deserving ones with his grace and remove the bad ones without noise. A bad minister is a monarchical error: such errors should be corrected, but secretly, in order that the people have confidence in the Tzar's personal selection. . . ."

In the same way Karamzin argued against the uncalled for confessions of the Government regarding the bad financial conditions. Concerning the superabundant issue of assignations in former years he remarked: "When an inevitable evil has been done, one should deliberate and take measures quietly, not whimper, not beat the tocsin, which increase the evil. Let the ministers be sincere before the Tzar alone, but not before the people; God beware if they will follow a different rule: to deceive the Tzar and reveal the truth to the people. . . ." (!) Karamzin agreed to the redemption of assigna-

tions, but the declaration of the assignations as a state-debt he considered the height of thoughtlessness. The naïveté of Karamzin's argument is remarkable: as if he did not understand that if secrecy in the management of affairs existed it would be easiest for the ministers to deceive the Monarch.

A curious feature of Karamzin's memorandum is its noble's point of view. Not of course the point of view of the constitutionalist-nobles, not that of the liberals of his time, from the noble Mordvinov to the commoner Speransky, but the point of view followed and promulgated by Catherine, namely that the nobility was the first class in the state and its relations to other classes, among them to bonded peasants, were inviolable, while in regard to the autocracy of the sovereign the nobles had to be submissive and loyal servants.

The presence of general dissatisfaction in the country Speransky ascribed to the ripeness of the public for a radical reorganisation of the form of government; whereas Karamzin explained it by the failure of the new reforms. Both of them were wrong: the dissatisfaction had more real reasons — it was rooted in the fallacious foreign policy that brought about the unnecessary, at least from the point of view of the contemporaries, war of 1805–1807, the Continental System and its resultant ruination of the country, and finally the Tilsit humiliation which offended the national honour and aroused a keen patriotic opposition to the friendship of Alexander with Napoleon. Karamzin did mention those circumstances in passing, but he did not allow them the primary significance which they undoubtedly had.

It is curious that Speransky's enemies tried, and one must say not without considerable success, to spread the information that he intended to introduce in Russia the Code of Napoleon, that he was an admirer of Napoleon, if not his agent. The success of those insinuations can be explained by the strength

of the patriotic protestantism that dominated society at that time.

Before passing to the next period I must say a few words about the condition of popular education at that time. The activity of the Ministry of Education, which had well developed in the preceding period, especially in the years 1803–4, came to a standstill for lack of means. Yet private societies and literature continued to grow. A number of literary and philanthropic societies were founded. Besides Shiskov's "Russian Discourse" we should mention the "Society of Lovers of Russian Letters" founded by Yazykov at the university of Moscow; the "Society of Lovers of Mathematics," founded by Mikhail Muraviov at the age of fifteen, which later developed into a free school and served as the cradle of the Russian General Staff; many of the members of the secret societies in the twenties were educated in that school. At the university of Moscow was opened by Professor Chebotarev a "Society of Russian History and Antiquities"; at the same university was founded in 1804 by Count A. K. Razumovsky the "Society of Nature Experimentators," which still enjoys a deserved fame. Such societies were opened even in the provinces; for instance, in Kazan was founded in 1806 a "Society of Lovers of Russian Letters," which had in 1811 a membership of thirty-two.

CHAPTER IX

WE have observed the conditions in Russia after the Treaty of Tilsit — the third period of Alexander's reign. The alliance with Napoleon was intolerable for Russia not only because it conflicted with national consciousness and pride, but also because it destroyed the economic forces and the welfare of the Russian state and people. Napoleon, while forcing Russia to waste her forces fruitlessly in wars with England, Sweden, Turkey, and Austria, sharpened at the same time the Polish question in a way quite dangerous for Russia. The relations of the Poles to Alexander became increasingly unhappy, while as devoted allies of Napoleon in his war against Austria in 1809 they received by the treaty after the battle of Wagram a considerable territorial addition to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw at the expense of Galicia, with a population of over one and a half million; at the same time Russia received but a small portion of Galicia, the district of Tarnopol, with a population of only four hundred thousand. True, Alexander was in no need of territorial acquisitions; but the Russian Government could not remain indifferent to the growth of the hostile Duchy, the more so since it learned the secret views and plans of Napoleon from the confidential report of Duroc, obtained from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Ambassador Prince Kurakin. Duroc had definitely declared in his report that Napoleon's domination of Europe would not be firmly based as long as even in one country there reigned a Bourbon, as long as Austria was not excluded from the German Empire, and as long as Russia was not weakened and repulsed beyond the Dnieper and Western Dvina. With equal

definiteness Duroc condemned the acquiescence of the former French government in the partition of Poland, and recommended the restoration of the frontiers of 1772, as a necessary bulwark against Russia. The report naturally alarmed the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; but since it could not refer to a stolen document, the Russian Government based its apprehensions and complaints concerning the Polish question on the territorial aggrandisements of the Duchy of Warsaw in formal violation of one of the statutes of the Tilsit Treaty. To appease Alexander on this point Napoleon agreed to a special treaty with Russia, by which both emperors mutually guaranteed to oppose the restoration of an independent Polish state. But when such a treaty was concluded by the French representative, Caulaincourt, and the Russian Minister, Rumiantzev, Napoleon declined to ratify the document, alleging that Caulaincourt had overstepped his powers. His refusal came immediately after the failure of his negotiations for marrying one of Alexander's sisters, Anna Paulovna; some historians see an inner connection between those two events. But the reason evidently lay not in the unsuccessful wooing which had not even begun formally, but in the fact that Napoleon was decidedly unwilling to alter his policy in regard to the Polish question, and simply tried to gain time, since in view of his failures in Spain he was not ready for a war with Russia. At the same time he drove out the Duke of Oldenburg from his own territory, on account of the Duke's failing to observe strictly the Continental System. The house of Oldenburg had received that territory from their older line, the house of Holstein-Hotorp, after the latter had become connected with the Russian reigning dynasty, beginning with Peter III. Alexander, as a representative of that house, considered himself personally insulted, and after failing in his negotiations for the compensation of the Duke with some other territory, he sent a protesting circular to all European courts. Napoleon

took the protest as a *casus belli,* and if he did not immediately declare war, it was because he was still not ready for it. Finally Russia's violation of the Continental System by the acceptance of Speransky's plan, and particularly the tariff of 1810, which directly affected the pockets of the French merchants and manufacturers, appeared to be the most important circumstances in which Napoleon could not acquiesce.

By the beginning of the year 1812 the war between France and Russia was inevitable. It was clear that in that "last struggle" between Alexander and Napoleon, Austria, and especially Prussia, not to mention the other states that were subjected by France, could not remain neutral. Prussia might side with Russia in case Russia led an offensive campaign and threw her armies across the Niemen before Napoleon had time to draw there sufficient forces. But Russia was not in position to do it, as the Poles would have given an energetic opposition from the very first, while the Prussian fortresses had remained in the hands of the French since 1806, so that Napoleon could have definitely destroyed Prussia before Alexander had time to come to her help. Besides, the war with Turkey had not come to an end until the spring of 1812, and on the whole, the forces which Russia could move against Napoleon were considerably inferior to those that he was able to draw to the Vistula, even not counting the Austrian and Prussian armies. Thus a Russian offensive was unthinkable.

Before the outbreak of the war, however, Napoleon suffered two important diplomatic fiascoes. He failed to draw into the coalition against Russia either Sweden or Turkey.

He failed to win over Sweden — in spite of his promise to restore Finland and even the Baltic (Ostsee) provinces — first of all because Sweden was unable to fight against England, who of course renewed her alliance with Russia immediately after Russia had broken away from France; besides, the provoking actions of Napoleon's agents in Swedish Pomerania

strongly aroused the Swedes against France; finally Bernadotte, Sweden's heir-elect, being of old Napoleon's rival, refused to enter into an alliance with him. On the contrary, after a meeting with Alexander in the summer of 1812 Bernadotte concluded with him a friendly agreement by which the Russian emperor promised to assist in the annexation of Norway to Sweden as a compensation for Finland. Owing to this treaty Alexander was not only relieved from apprehensions about an attack from that side (which would have threatened Petrograd), but he was enabled to withdraw his troops from Finland and employ them against Napoleon.

As to Turkey, the new Russian commander, Kutuzov, succeeded early in 1812 in decisively defeating the Turks, after which and in view of the continued internal disturbances in Turkey they were unable to continue the war. In May, 1812, Kutuzov signed in Bucharest a peace with Turkey, at a most opportune moment — two weeks before the entrance of Napoleon's army into Russia. Although now there could no longer be any chance of the annexation of Moldavia and Wallachia — to which Napoleon gave his conditional consent at Tilsit and Erfurt — still by that peace Russian territory was enlarged by the addition of Bessarabia, with the river Prut. True, in making the treaty Kutuzov neglected some of Alexander's instructions: Alexander had insisted on demanding from Turkey as an indispensable condition of peace its conclusion of a defensive and offensive alliance with Russia, or at least a secure passage for the Russian army through Turkish territory to Napoleon's Illyria. Kutuzov's relinquishment of those demands was of great service, since less than one month after the peace with Turkey Napoleon's army was on Russian territory.

To such an experienced general as Kutuzov it was clear even then that the coming war was to be defensive, not offensive: one had to think not of sending troops to Illyria, ac-

cording to the dreams of Alexander and the ambitious Admiral Chichagov who was sent to the Southern army in place of Kutuzov, but of concentrating all defensive forces against the enormous enemy whom, even then, many considered it possible to defeat only by drawing him far into the depths of Russia. The "Scythian" plan, which consisted in evading serious battles, but in fighting off attacks, and constant retreating, leaving behind devastated and ruined places,— had been in many minds before the war of 1812. There was nothing new about the method which was known in ancient times (since Darius of Persia); but for the realisation of such a plan it was necessary that the war became national, for only the people could burn their own houses, not the army, which in doing so against the wish of the population would acquire a new enemy in them.

Alexander understood this well. Aware of the danger and responsibility of a war with Napoleon, and at the same time of its inevitability, he hoped that the war on Russian territory would become not less popular than that in Spain. The importance of a popular war Alexander appreciated even before the Spanish failure of Napoleon: he tried even in 1806, as you remember,— and not without success — to arouse the population against Napoleon, not scrupling about means. Yet a "Scythian" war was well adapted for Scythians; while in a land that stood even on such a stage of culture as Russia of those days, such a war was combined with terrible sacrifices. Moreover, the devastation had to begin from the western region, the most cultured and populated, and but recently annexed to Russia. Finally the necessity and inevitability of a "Scythian" war, in spite of its popularity, was not understood by all.

Towards the beginning of the year 1812 Napoleon was in a position to concentrate on the Russian frontier with the aid of all his allies and vassals about four hundred thousand men,

and could add soon after one hundred and fifty thousand more. Russia was able to draw to the border not more than two hundred thousand men. This alone made an offensive war impossible, even disregarding Napoleon's genius and the talents and experience of his generals. Yet Alexander did not lose hope of prevailing in the long run over his enemy. On the very eve of the war he frankly said to one of Napoleon's messengers, General Narbonne, that he appreciated all the advantages of the French, but that he reckoned on his side *space and time;* his words ultimately came true, and " space and time," combined with his own firmness and perseverance and those of all Russia, did give him a complete triumph.

The original plan of the campaign consisted in slowly retreating before Napoleon, retaining him at positions convenient for giving resistance, and at the same time attempting to attack his flanks and rear. For this reason the Russian forces were divided into two armies, of which one under the command of the Minister of War, Barclay de Tolly, one of the heroes of the Finland campaign, was to retreat, to resist at fortified positions, and to draw Napoleon gradually into the heart of the country; the other army, commanded by Bagration, one of Suvorov's generals, was to harass the enemy's flanks and rear. The army of Barclay was concentrated more to the north (in the province of Vilna), and that of Bagration, more to the south (south of Grodno). But about half of Bagration's army — nearly forty thousand men — had to be sent at once against the Austrians and other allies of the French, who invaded Volhynia through Galicia. At the same time Barclay had to set aside a considerable corps under the command of Witgenstein for the defence of the Ostsee (Baltic) provinces and the road to Petrograd. For this reason, and in view of the fact that the Drissa fortifications on the Western Dvina were found to be in wretched condition, Barclay's forces were quite insufficient for checking Napoleon's advance.

After the separation of Witgenstein's corps from Barclay, and of several divisions of Bagration for the aid of Tormasov, Barclay's army consisted of eighty thousand, Bagration's of less than forty thousand, and Napoleon by cutting the communications between the two armies could defeat them singly, one after the other. Towards this were directed his efforts after his moving out of Vilna early in July. In view of this danger the Russian armies had to unite as soon as possible, and to give up their original plan. To prevent this Napoleon attempted to outflank Barclay under Vitebsk. Barclay understood Napoleon's intention, and endeavoured to unite with Bagration at Vitebsk. Napoleon's plan failed owing to the quick march of Barclay from Drissa to Vitebsk and to the brave resistance of a small corps under the command of Count Osterman-Tolstoy that was ordered to keep off the main forces of the French; but Barclay did not succeed in uniting with Bagration at Vitebsk, since under the furious attack of Davout, Bagration had to withdraw to Smolensk, where the Russian armies finally came together. A considerable battle took place there; the Russians evacuated Smolensk only after the enemy's cannonade had reduced it to a heap of burning ruins. Immediately after Smolensk Napoleon attempted to repulse the Russian army from the Moscow road to the north, and thus cut it off from the fertile southern provinces, but in this attempt he also failed and was forced to abandon his idea after a bloody battle at the Valutin Hill on the Moscow road.

In spite of the swift, aggressive attack of Napoleon's army and the almost uninterrupted retreat of the Russians who left behind them burned and devastated lands, the position of Napoleon grew with every step more difficult and perilous. After the battle at the Valutin Hill Napoleon even considered stopping for the winter at Smolensk; but the waste land around the ruined city did not appeal to him, and he determined to move on to the heart of Russia, Moscow, where he hoped to

dictate terms of peace to the defeated enemy. In the meantime his army melted. Already at Vilna he had about fifty thousand sick soldiers. His main army, which had consisted — with the subtraction of the corps of Macdonald and Oudinot, later enforced by the division of St. Syr, that were to march against Petrograd and the Ostsee provinces — of three hundred thousand men, had lost by the time of entering Vitebsk nearly one hundred thousand in battles and from sickness, i.e., the army was diminished by one-third; after Smolensk and the Valutin Hill not more than one-half of the original number remained in the ranks.

The Russians retreated in good order, fighting furiously. Their resistance was costly both for them and for Napoleon. When under the attack of Napoleon's enormous army Osterman-Tolstoy was asked by his adjutants, what there remained to do, he answered: "To stand and die!" Such was the mood of the army. The heroic resistance of Nievierovsky's division of recruits, which held back the entire cavalry of Murat during the retreat of Bagration, and Raievsky's short but glorious defence of Smolensk against Napoleon's main forces are well known. One must bear in mind that while Napoleon's losses were irretrievable, the losses of the Russians who retreated into the country could be considerably replenished by reserves.

If Alexander understood clearly the responsibility of the war, Napoleon had also foreseen all the difficulties in store, particularly in regard to forage and provision, and for this reason he had stored up early in 1812 an enormous amount of provisions at Danzig, which should have kept his army for a whole year. But these provisions required a train of ten thousand carts, a big burden for the marching army; the train had to be constantly guarded from Cossack-raids. Having prepared provisions for the soldiers Napoleon nevertheless could not start the campaign till the middle of May, and remained

motionless on the Russian border for lack of provender for his horses that amounted to more than one hundred and twenty thousand; he had to wait till the middle of May, when the fields could offer some forage. This forced delay eventually proved very costly.

Thus the difficulties did not surprise Napoleon; he knew them and yet determined to achieve his purpose. One must say he did reach his purpose: he took Moscow. But there disappointment awaited him. He had underrated the force of popular resistance; he understood it when in Moscow, but it was too late for making repairs.

Looking back with the eye of a historian upon the war of 1812 and its outcome, one can easily see that Napoleon's chances began to fall at the very start, and fell constantly; but contemporaries did not understand this at once; they only knew that Napoleon was advancing, and the Russians retreating. Such a course of affairs aroused despondency in the population and grumbling in the army, which craved a general battle. The grumbling grew also from the fact that at the head of the army stood a German; the generals intrigued against Barclay de Tolly, and even gossiped about his being a traitor. The matter was complicated by unfriendliness between Barclay and Bagration; although formally Bagration submitted to Barclay, he commanded his army independently. Finally under the pressure of public opinion Alexander determined to appoint a new commander for both armies. The general voice was for Kutuzov. Personally he was disagreeable to Alexander ever since Austerlitz and his disobedience at the conclusion of the Bucharest Treaty, yet he yielded to the popular demand. Convinced of the need of a *national* war with Napoleon, Alexander had been very attentive to the public voice at that time, as we have observed. For this reason he sacrificed Speransky, appointed to the post of Imperial Secretary Ad-

miral Shishkov, a "true-Russian" patriot of the ancient calibre, but in no way a statesman; for the same reason he appointed as Governor-General of Moscow the madcap Rastopchin who had been famous by his patriotic pamphlets and placards. For the same considerations he appointed Prince Kutuzov chief commander of all his armies.

At first Alexander intended to remain with the army, and he arrived at the headquarters in Vilna, but Shishkov, who accompanied him, had observed at the right moment that the Emperor's presence was a great inconvenience, embarrassing the actions of the Chief Commander. He persuaded Adjutant-General Balashov and Count Arakcheiev to sign with him a letter to Alexander, in which they entreated the Tzar to leave the army and go to Moscow for the support and upheaval of the patriotic spirit.

Reluctantly Alexander followed Shishkov's advice. In Moscow he was met with an outburst of general enthusiasm which exceeded all his expectations. The nobility of the province of Moscow offered at once three million rubles, an enormous sum for that time, and volunteered to bring ten recruits from every hundred souls, which meant almost half of the working population capable of bearing arms. The Moscow merchants offered ten million rubles. Similar unusual offers were made by the nobles of the provinces of Smolensk, Estland, Pskov, Tver, and others. Towards autumn the total amount of the contributions exceeded one hundred millions. The war was becoming truly national. Never before or after had such colossal sums been contributed.

Kutuzov assumed the commandership of the army at the village Tzarevo-Zaymishche, the place where Barclay had intended to give Napoleon a general battle, yielding to the persuasions of his staff and the desire of the whole army. After the observation of the positions by Benigsen, who had arrived

with Kutuzov, it was decided to retreat still farther, and the general battle took place at Borodino, one hundred and thirty versts from Moscow, ten versts from Mozhaysk.[1]

The general course of that battle is well known, and I shall not describe it. It was the bloodiest of all Napoleonic battles; both armies lost half of their men, the number of killed and wounded officers alone exceeded two thousand. The Russians lost over twenty generals, among them Bagration and Tuchkov; Napoleon lost forty-nine generals.

Military historians are of the opinion that Napoleon could have won the battle if he had employed his Guards; but he refused to risk his Guards at a distance of three thousand versts from France, and he said so himself during the battle in answer to the advice of his staff.

Kutuzov, despite the fact that he had maintained all his positions, upon the review of his army after the two days' fighting came to the conclusion that it was necessary to retreat to Moscow, and not finding a good position for a new battle around Moscow he moved on beyond Moscow, at first on the road of Riazan, and then on the Kaluga road. Moscow was surrendered without fighting.[2] Napoleon's army,

[1] A verst is equivalent to 0.6629 of a mile, or 1.067 of a kilometer.

[2] The impression of the surrender of Moscow upon the public was reflected in numerous memoirs of that time, some of which have been used in later-day fiction, with particular artistic truthfulness in Tolstoy's "War and Peace." Recently was published the curious correspondence of Alexander with his favourite sister, Catherine Paulovna (issued by Grand Duke Nicolay Mikhailovich, Petrograd, 1910), which well illustrates the general indignation of the public at the first news about the evacuation of Moscow. On September 6 Catherine Paulovna, who mingled with patriots of the type of Karamzin and Rastopchin, wrote to her brother from Yaroslavl: "The occupation of Moscow by the French has overfilled the cup of despair in all minds, dissatisfaction has spread to an extreme degree, and even you (i.e., the Tzar) are not spared in the condemnations. . . . You are loudly blamed for the misfortunes of your empire, for the general ruination, in a word for the loss of the country's and of your own

"smashed at the Russians," in the expression of Yermolov, entered Moscow and encamped there for a long rest. That standstill reduced the French army to a definite decay and demoralisation. In the depopulated Moscow there began continuous conflagrations which could not be extinguished — Rastopchin had wisely withdrawn all pipes. There was nothing to eat; the remainder of the provisions was soon plundered. Astounded by the sight of the empty, burning Moscow, in which he had expected to find comfortable and well provided quarters, Napoleon remained five weeks without action in the "conquered" city among heaps of burning ruins. All his peace preludes were rejected. After five weeks Napoleon left Moscow with the single desire of returning home with his army. But Kutuzov blocked his way to the south, and he had to return by the old, devastated road of Smolensk. A cruel guerrilla war began, severe frost came earlier than usually, and the Grande Armée was fast reduced to a big frozen, starving mob, beaten and captured not only by peasants, but even by women. The escape of Napoleon in a native carriage, wrapped up in shawls and furs, but without his army, was due only to the negligence of Admiral Chichagov, who overlooked him. At Warsaw Napoleon said: "From the sublime to the ridiculous is only one step. . . ."

Alexander was in a position to raise his head high; he had not only fulfilled his promise "not to make peace as long as there remained one armed enemy in Russia," but there was no one to negotiate with.

Napoleon, however, though he had lost his army, did not

dignity." She reminded him of his determination not to conclude peace even if he had to retreat to Kazan.

Alexander, touched to the quick by that sharp letter, replied a few days later at his first moment of leisure in a long epistle, in which he expressed a firm and sober view of his own position and that of Russia, and his opinion about the persons in whose hands was at that time held to a considerable extent the fate of the army and Russia.

lose his spirit and self-confidence, and hastened to France to gather new troops; he foresaw that with the collapse of his army all his subjected nations would attempt to throw off his yoke.

Before Alexander appeared the question: Should he be satisfied with the repelling of the enemy from Russia, or should he make use of Napoleon's desperate plight and undertake the liberation of Europe from his power?

Alexander chose the latter. For three whole years he had been the "Agamemnon" of Europe, the king of kings, as they said then. One cannot deny that the task was of great importance for Russia also, as there could be no doubt that if Napoleon was given time to recuperate he would not fail to attempt eventually a *revanche*.

Alexander's activity in Europe during 1813–15 was undoubtedly the most brilliant phase in his life, but it forms the contents of universal, not Russian history. In regard to the socio-political process which we are studying, that activity has but an indirect and, moreover, a negative significance. For this reason we shall discuss only those circumstances of that period which have some bearing on the process under our observation.

The struggle with Napoleon was far from easy even after 1812. Still more difficult was the struggle that Alexander had to carry on against the mistrust and vacillations of his allies, Austria and Prussia. Finally after the defeat of Napoleon in the "battle of the nations" at Leipzig, Germany was freed from the French, and the allies, urged and led by Alexander (though formally the commander of the allied armies was not he, but an Austrian general — the weak wavering Prince Schwarzenberg), had passed by the beginning of the year 1814 the French border, and in April of the same year they entered Paris; Napoleon signed his abdication and withdrew to the island Elbe. The Bourbons were restored, and

Louis XVIII, to a great measure under the influence of Alexander, granted a constitutional charter.

At the Vienna Congress the map of Europe had to be rearranged once more; it was proposed to give some autonomy and representative governments to the nationalities that had taken part in the wars against Napoleon. The Congress restored the old frontiers of France (as before 1792), added a considerable slice to Austria, and remapped Germany without special difficulties. One of the most difficult questions was that of Poland. On the one hand Austria, England, and France feared a too strong Russia, and did not want to give her Poland; on the other hand complications arose in connection with the necessary compensation of Prussia for her losses by the Tilsit Treaty. Alexander did not want to offend the king of Prussia, who was now his faithful ally; but at Tilsit the Grand Duchy of Warsaw had been formed out of Prussian possessions. Alexander had intended to make use of Saxony for the compensation of Prussia, without destroying the new Polish state. The king of Saxony was Napoleon's most devoted ally, and was therefore treated almost as a traitor to the German nation; the Saxon people cared nothing about depriving their king of his dominion, since they were indignant over his anti-German policy; Frederick William of Prussia was pleased to receive so many German subjects in place of hostile Poles. But the king of Saxony found an unexpected and energetic champion in Talleyrand, who represented the interests of Louis XVIII at the Congress. Of course Talleyrand was not interested in Saxon affairs, but he endeavoured to uphold the interests of the small German states in order to preserve the weakness and disunion of Germany; besides, he hoped to arouse hostile feelings among the allies in connection with that question, and particularly to provoke mistrust in regard to Alexander. Indeed, he succeeded in drawing on his side England and Austria, and the three Powers refused to give Saxony to Prussia and

the Duchy of Warsaw to Russia. As a matter of fact Alexander wanted to receive the Duchy not for the sake of enlarging Russia's territory, but in order to fulfil his old promise to the Poles; he had intended to transform the Duchy of Warsaw into a Kingdom of Poland, which would have a liberal constitution under the sceptre of the Russian Tzar.

Affairs in Poland were at that moment very difficult. As soon as the Russians had crossed the frontier in 1813 and entered the Duchy, they established there a temporary government in the form of a commission of five, with V. S. Lanskoy at the head; the members of the commission were N. N. Novosiltzev, Prince A. A. Czartoryski, and two former ministers of the Duchy. The Poles had tightly knit their fate with that of Napoleon; they had fought bravely and vigorously in his ranks both in Spain and in Russia. In the meantime the Polish lands were reduced to complete ruin, since they had become the zone of war; this circumstance had completed the financial and economic destruction of the country which had been groaning under the burden of maintaining an army of sixty-five thousand men.

When Napoleon's army entered Russia in 1812, it was joined by many Poles who had been Russian subjects, especially from the Lithuanian provinces; they had thus broken their oath of allegiance to Alexander. Yet Alexander granted them all an amnesty after the war of 1812, and besides published a very friendly proclamation to the population of the Duchy of Warsaw. This prompted Czartoryski to present to the Tzar a new proposition about the restoration of Poland according to the frontiers of 1772 under the sceptre of Alexander's youngest brother, Grand Duke Mikhail. Alexander categorically refused, declaring that to restore Poland with its frontiers of 1772 and not have it under the sceptre of the emperor of Russia would be contrary to the national feelings of his subjects who could not sympathise with the relinquish-

ment of ancient Russian lands for which there had been centuries of struggle between Russia and Poland.

In this case Alexander understood correctly the sentiments of his people and army whose hostility towards the Poles was obvious; even some of the members of the Commission that governed Poland were not free from that feeling. Novosiltzev, for instance, called Alexander's attention to the Poles' opposition to everything Russian; Lanskoy vigorously protested against giving Poland an autonomy, particularly against preserving a separate Polish army which would, in his words, "become a snake spouting its venom at us." The diplomats and statesmen who surrounded Alexander at that time, Russians as well as foreigners, were all against the restoration of Poland, not to mention Metternich, who considered all the liberal plans of Alexander as dangerous dreams. The Russian ambassador to France, Count Pozzo di Borgo, expressed himself sharply against restoring Polish independence, and in a detailed memorandum he tried to prove on the basis of numerous historical analogies that Poland should not be restored, that she was not capable of a separate political existence, and that her restoration would be detrimental to Russia. Also Baron Stein, the famous Prussian reformer, one of the most honest statesmen of that epoch, considered that the maximum of what Poland should receive was a well organised local self-government. Even Capo d'Istria, subsequently the first president of liberated Greece, thought that Poland should not be given a constitution, since she had no developed middle class, but only a *szlachta* (nobility) and an enslaved peasantry.

In spite of all these opinions Alexander remained firm in his intentions. Though he refused in 1814 to restore to Poland her frontiers of 1772, he resolved not to return to Prussia the original Polish lands that formed the Duchy of Warsaw, but to found out of them an independent Polish state under his sceptre. In view of the sharp opposition of France, England,

and Austria, Alexander was forced to compromise: the king of Saxony retained his throne, and only a part of Saxony was given to Prussia; the king of Prussia received besides, the rich Rhenish provinces and the Duchy of Posen with the city of Thorn, which had formed a part of the Duchy of Warsaw before 1815.

Then Alexander had to give back to Austria all of Galicia, the part that was annexed by Napoleon to the Duchy of Warsaw and the part that was given by Napoleon to Russia. Thus the Tzar succeeded in forming a Polish kingdom only out of the lands that form at present [3] the ten provinces of the "Vistula Region." The agreement of the Powers on all disputable questions was accelerated by the news of Napoleon's flight from Elbe and his arrival at France. After his final defeat at Waterloo by the British and Prussians Napoleon abdicated for the second time and was exiled to the island of St. Helena.

Alexander left Vienna in 1815, not waiting for the end of the work of the Congress. To that time belongs his acquaintance with an elderly lady raving with mystical nonsense, Baroness Juliane Krüdener. Many historians and biographers of Alexander have ascribed a great importance to that acquaintanceship in regard to the growth of Alexander's religious mysticism; Alexander himself considered his meeting with her of great significance. But we must say that his inclination for mysticism had developed even before his meeting with the Baroness, which circumstance, in my opinion, had given Mme. Krüdener an access to him. A definite impulse to Alexander's mysticism was given evidently by the great and formidable events of 1812, but even before 1812 he had eagerly conversed with monks and "holy men." We read in Shishkov's memoirs that in 1813, among his reports on important state-questions Shishkov — the Imperial Secretary — read to Alexander se-

[3] I.e., before the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.— Tr.

lections from the Hebrew prophets, the text of which, it appeared to them, well fitted the contemporary events; at this both shed "tears of overcharged emotion." Since 1812 the New Testament had always been with Alexander, and he often used it as an oracle, opening pages at random and pondering over passages that had some relation to the facts of surrounding life. However, such mysticism was common in Europe at that time; the application of some expressions from the Apocalypse to Napoleon was particularly in vogue. The considerable spread of Freemasonry and the Masonic orders also caused the growth of mysticism. The colossal revolutions of that epoch contributed evidently to such an alarmed state of the contemporary mind. In any case the mystic mood of Alexander was not in any marked way reflected in 1815 upon his socio-political views and measures. But the far seeing La Harpe even then felt despondent about Alexander's new predilection.

In his foreign policy this inclination found expression, not without the influence of Baroness Krüdener, as it is asserted, in his at first quite innocent proposal to his allies about forming a Holy Alliance of the European monarchs for the promulgation of the ideas of peace and brotherhood in international relations. According to the idea of that Alliance the European monarchs were to treat one another as brothers, and their subjects, as children; all international misunderstandings and disputes were to be solved in a peaceful way. The king of Prussia expressed some sympathy with the idea; the emperor of Austria, Francis, a pietist who had been all his life in the hands of Jesuits, signed the agreement only after he had consulted Metternich, who said that although it was an empty chimera, it was yet an absolutely harmless one. The king of England could not sign the agreement without the approval of Parliament, but he expressed his sympathy in a personal letter to Alexander. Later into the Alliance had gradually entered

all European monarchs except the Sultan and the Pope. In the hands of Metternich this institution had ultimately degenerated into an alliance of rulers against revolting nationalities, but in 1815 the Alliance did not have such a character, and Alexander was still a sincere advocate of liberal institutions. Yet his struggle with Napoleon and with the remains of the Revolution acquired after 1812 a growing mystical and sacramental aspect, which caused his old tutor, La Harpe, to express his apprehension.

CHAPTER X

IN the autumn of 1815, after considerable travelling through Europe Alexander departed at last for Russia, and on his way stopped at Warsaw, where a special commission consisting exclusively of Poles was at that time busy working out the constitution of the Kingdom of Poland, according to Alexander's instructions. The constitution had some features that resembled Speransky's Plan and many features in common with the Charter of Louis XVIII; the members of the commission had in mind also the constitution given by Napoleon to the Duchy of Warsaw in 1807. At any rate, contemporaries, even such radicals as Carnot who then lived at Warsaw, considered that constitution very liberal, not only for an autocrat, but even much better than the Charter of Louis XVIII, which was given to France largely under the pressure of Alexander. The constitution of 1815 guaranteed freedom of the press, the limits of which were to be determined by the Diet, and personal inviolability; abolished confiscation of property and administrative banishment, instituted the use of the Polish language in the governmental institutions of the Kingdom, and the obligatory occupation of all administrative, judicial, and military positions by subjects of the Kingdom of Poland. It even instituted the oath to the constitution on the part of the Tzar of Poland, i.e., the Russian Emperor, a point that is not found in the present Russian constitution. The Diet was to be the legislative apparatus; it consisted of the king and two chambers. The lower chamber had seventy-one members elected by the landowning nobility, and fifty-one members from the cities. The right of suffrage was given to persons not below the age of thirty, who paid in direct taxes

not less than one hundred *zloty* (fifteen rubles in silver). The upper chamber consisted of "Princes of the blood," i.e., members of the Imperial Russian house during their abode in Warsaw, several Catholic bishops, one Uniate[1] bishop, and several Voivodes[2] and Castellans.[3] The membership of the upper chamber was half that of the lower chamber; the members were appointed by the Emperor, one from every two candidates recommended by the Senate out of persons who paid direct taxes of not less than two thousand *zloty* (three hundred rubles).

The Diet assembled once in two years for thirty days, during which time it had to discuss all the legislative projects brought in by the ministry responsible before it. The Diet had no legislative initiative, though it could present petitions to the Tzar and raise questions about ministerial responsibility. All the projects presented to the Diet by the ministry were first discussed in the State-Council whose rôle in this instance corresponded with that given it by Speransky's original Plan. The entire power in the land was given by that constitution to the *szlachta,* while certain administrative and judicial positions were to be occupied *only* by landowners.

Alexander at once ratified the constitution at Petrograd on December 12, 1815. In his speech on that occasion Prince Adam Czartoryski remarked that "Emperor Alexander could dominate by sheer force, but, led by the inspiration of virtue, he rejected such a domination. He has based his power not on external right alone, but on the feeling of gratitude, on the feeling of loyalty, and on that moral might which originates in place of terror — a feeling of obligation, in place of compulsion — devotion and voluntary sacrifices."

However, Czartoryski himself was for the second time of-

[1] The Uniates are a small sect professing a creed which is a compromise between Roman Catholicism and Greek Catholicism.— Tr.

[2] Polish administrative officials. The Poles employed also the equivalent title of *palatinus.*— Tr.

[3] Originally, castle-managers. Later — councillors.— Tr.

fended and disappointed in his expectations by Alexander. For the post of *Namiestnik* (viceroy) was appointed not he, but an old Polish general, Zayoncheck, a former Republican, who had commanded a division under Napoleon. The Council included besides five ministers who divided among them the spheres of administration, and besides the president (the viceroy) — an Imperial Commissary, and that position was given to Novosiltzev, whose attitude towards the restoration of Poland was quite sceptical. As commander of the Polish army — forty thousand men — was appointed Grand Duke Constantine, an excited, violent man who was considered responsible for the subsequent downfall of the Polish constitution.

During his stay at Warsaw Alexander received a deputation of Lithuanian nobles with Prince Oginsky at their head, but on the condition that they should not even mention the annexation of the Lithuanian provinces to Poland, and that the deputation did not include representatives of Volhynia and Podolia.[4]

In Russia Alexander was awaited by a mass of cares for the internal reconstruction of the country and the restoration of its welfare, which had been destroyed by the wars. The year of 1812 was accompanied with unparalleled misery, and the splendid defeat of the powerful enemy was accomplished at a big

[4] In his memoirs Prince Oginsky describes his conversation with Alexander at Warsaw in 1815, and the reception of the deputation from three Lithuanian provinces: Vilna, Grodno, and Minsk. In his conversation with Oginsky Alexander clearly hinted at his intention to join those provinces to Poland, figuring that through such a measure they would become closer united with the Russian Empire, since their population would have no more reason for dissatisfaction. But at the same time he forbade the delegates to ask him about it, fearing that this would sharpen the hostility of Russian public opinion toward the question. That hostility was keenly expressed in Karamzin's memorandum "An opinion of a Russian citizen" presented to Alexander in 1819, and in his notes "For posterity"; it is also illustrated in the memoirs of the Decembrist Yakushkin who observed the attitude of the progressive military circles towards the Polish question in the years 1817–18.

cost not only for the enemy, but also for Russia. Eyewitnesses relate unbelievable pictures of horror and death, that presented themselves to travellers on the big Smolensk road at the beginning of 1813. The mass of unburied corpses infected the air along the entire line from Vilna to Smolensk, and even far aside from that tract. Shishkov says that in February, 1813, the Minister of Police, Balashov, who accompanied him, had received a report from two provinces — Smolensk and Minsk — that there had been gathered and burned ninety-six thousand corpses, and that numerous more still remained on the ground. No wonder that various epidemics had spread in those provinces. In 1813 the population of the Smolensk province decreased by fifty-seven thousand, and that of Tver, which touched the war-zone only on its southern end, had lost twelve thousand. Similar losses were sustained by other provinces in the vicinity of the war-zone. Outside of the epidemics, the loss in human life was caused by direct consumption of the war-operations. During those years about one million men and nearly three thousand militia-men were recruited, which constituted almost one-third of the able-bodied population of the country. On the whole, in 1813 the population, instead of the normal increase of six hundred to six hundred and fifty thousand, suffered a loss of two thousand seven hundred men (according to the incomplete birth-registration of that year), and the general number of human lives lost during the last Napoleonic wars should be put at not less than one million and a half.

The provinces of Kovno, Vitebsk, Grodno, Mohilev, Volhynia, Vilna, Smolensk, and Moscow suffered most of all, and then the provinces of Kurland, Pskov, Tver, Kaluga. The material losses of the province of Moscow alone were figured out by the English who subsidised the campaign against Napoleon and therefore carefully gathered information about conditions in Russia, as two hundred and seventy million rubles. The

provinces adjacent to the war-zone had also suffered greatly, owing to epidemics and the cart-tax. In the province of Tver that tax required at times one cart from every two and a half persons, i.e., an amount of carts that did not exist there at all. The provinces of Novgorod, Tver, Vladimir, and Yaroslavl were once ordered to contribute one hundred and forty-seven thousand carts at the fiscal price of four million six hundred and sixty-eight thousand rubles, whereas the peasants had to pay in addition about nine million rubles more. This order had to be recalled, but only after it had begun to be carried out, and the population was already ruined. Such examples were numerous.

As early as in April, 1812, the Minister of Finance, Guriev, proposed to raise provender and provisions for the army through requisitions from the population, who were to receive notes with a definite date of payment. These so called "obligations" did not lower the course of the assignations, being of a fixed date. But the Government's settlements of those notes were so extended, in spite of Alexander's sharp reprimands to the Committee of Ministers, that they had not been executed even towards the end of his reign, and the landowners who were the chief creditors of the Government on those notes lost all hope of recovering their money and relinquished their claims, involuntarily turning them thus into new contributions.

The general cost of the war of 1812–15 is very difficult to gauge at present. According to the report of Barclay de Tolly, composed by Kankrin, the fiscal expenses were expressed in an astonishingly small sum — one hundred fifty-seven and a half million rubles for the four years. But the enormous expenses of the population itself are hardly estimable. In his secret memorandum Minister Guriev moderately estimated the expenses of the people as early as 1812 above two hundred million rubles. The upheaval of patriotism caused by the in-

vasion of the enemy was expressed in voluntary direct contributions which in 1812 exceeded one hundred million rubles and enabled the Government to bring the campaign of 1812 to an end without special difficulties. The general sum of Russia's material loss during those years probably exceeded one billion rubles.

The population had borne those expenses without complaints and even with sincere enthusiasm, in spite of the gross abuses by the ministerial and commissariat-officials. But the paying capacity of the population was entirely drained, and in many places the payment of all taxes had ceased already in 1815. The treasury was then almost constantly empty. When in 1813 Alexander decided to transfer the war abroad Barclay de Tolly reported that for the maintenance of the army of two hundred thousand men for the next two months there were needed fourteen and a half million rubles in coin, whereas the total amount of coin in possession of the treasury at that moment was not more than five and one-fourth million rubles, so that it was short of nine million. An issue of assignations would be of no help, as there was required only metal-money; a loan was unattainable: Arakcheiev wrote then to Count Nesselrode about the Government's apprehensions that the course of the paper ruble would fall to ten copecks.

Under such conditions the continuation of the war with Napoleon was made possible only through the big subsidies of England.

To a great extent Russia was saved from total bankruptcy owing to her favourable balance of trade, which had been established after the tariff of 1810. The exports considerably exceeded the imports, in spite of the war. In 1812 the importations were less than ninety million rubles, while the export rose to one hundred and fifty million. This was due to the alliance with England and the unmolested trade with her through Petrograd and Arkhangelsk.

It is remarkable that in 1812 the course of the ruble on the London Exchange was at its highest at the moment of Napoleon's entry into Moscow. At the same time the trade with China and Central Asia continued to develop; considerable quantities of cotton were imported from the Central Asiatic Khanates. Minister Guriev began to work out a plan for the return to a more liberal tariff, seeing that Russian manufactures had been sufficiently supported; his intention aroused wailing among the Moscow manufacturers who had just started to stand firmly on their feet, and their views were upheld by the Minister of Interior, Kozodavlev, and even by the Chancellor, Count N. P. Rumiantzev, who despite his fame as an admirer of the French and Napoleon, considered the claims of the Moscow manufacturers just. Count Guriev suffered a fiasco in 1813: the revision of the tariff was found untimely.

The rise of national feeling in the years 1812–1815 was shown also in the energetic activity of private persons for support of the families that had suffered from the war; in general the public had for the first time demonstrated initiative and voluntary action.

Of equal interest is the rapidity with which Moscow and other burned cities were rebuilt; the Government gave for this purpose some subsidies, altogether about fifteen million rubles. The cities began to revive at the beginning of the twenties, but the landowners' estates could not recuperate so soon from their ruination, and their indebtedness had assumed enormous dimensions and continued growing to the very time of the abolition of serfdom.

The vigorous work that was manifested throughout Russia after the war showed that the nation had come out of the terrible calamity renewed and ready for further growth and cultural development. High spirits were sustained also by the military successes that had brought Russia to the peak of fame. These together with the reforms of the first years of Alexan-

der's reign gave assurance that after the happy end of the war and with the advent of peaceful times the socio-political forms of the country which required radical changes, especially in the eyes of those Russians who had been abroad and observed the different life there, would be rapidly improved.

It is obvious how important had been the influence of those men on the public, not only in the capitals and large cities, but even in remote provincial corners. The army-officers who had returned from France affected the nobility, the merchants, and the commoners, and this influence combined well with the early liberal tendencies of the Government.

True, the educational activity of the Government had come to a standstill after 1805 owing to lack of funds. But the progressive work of the Government was later renewed in the reforms of Speransky, and it appeared clear to the public that at the end of the war Alexander would take up again his early reforms, enriched with experience and knowledge.

It seemed that Alexander's activity in Paris, and later in Poland, gave good reasons for the confirmation of those hopes. True, the sporadic rumours about Alexander's infatuation with mysticism, and the manifesto which he issued on January 1, 1816, soon after his return to Russia, would have served as warnings for those who had been over-optimistic; but mystic moods could not alarm the progressive elements of that time, when mysticism was common and a considerable portion of society belonged to various Masonic orders or had close friends among the Masons. As to the manifesto of January 1, 1816, which was written by Shishkov back in 1814 on the occasion of the entry of the allied armies into Paris, and contained many loud phrases against the " Godless " French and the " abominable " revolutionists, without however attacking constitutional ideas,— it had made a very bad impression abroad, but passed without special notice in Russia, and was soon forgotten.

In any case Alexander in 1816 was still a sincere and con-

vinced constitutionalist, and we must observe that he had realised his ideas in actual life — by granting constitutions to Finland and Poland, and by helping France and some secondary European states to secure constitutions.

Even his closest assistants were convinced then of his intention to give Russia a constitution.[5] Among the papers of General Kiselev were preserved notes about a detailed report that he made before Alexander in 1816 about the state of affairs in south Russia. Kiselev had been requested to find men fitted for the new administrative work, but having journeyed through the South he discovered not so many capable men as a mass of abuses, which he reported to Alexander. After hearing the report, Alexander remarked: "One cannot do everything at once: circumstances have not allowed us to take proper care of internal affairs, but at present we are engaged in reorganising. . . ." Discussing the administrative abuses in the South the Emperor said: "I know that the majority of the administrative officials should be dismissed, and you are right in holding that the evil comes both from the higher officials and from the poor selection of lower officials. But where can you get them? I am unable to choose fifty-two governors, and there are needed thou-

[5] However, one of the early co-operators of Alexander's reforms, Count V. P. Kochubey, who had held quite moderate views while on the famous Committee, now expressed his desiderata with still greater caution. After Alexander's death among his papers was found a memorandum presented by Kochubey at the very end of 1814. Among other things he wrote: "The Russian Empire is an autocratic state, and whether we consider its dimensions or its geographic position, the degree of its education and many other circumstances, we must admit that this form of government is the only one that will be proper for Russia for many years; but this form cannot prevent the Tzar from choosing all possible ways for the best government, and as it is proven that a monarch, however far seeing he may be, cannot alone embrace all branches of the government, he is obliged to seek firm state institutions which, bringing the empire nearer to other best ordered states, would present to the subjects the advantages of a just, mild, and enlightened government. . . ."

sands. . . ." "The army, the civil administration, everything, is not as I would have it — but what can you do? You cannot do everything at once; there are no assistants. . . ."

From that conversation, copied by Kiselev with a photographic exactness, we learn that Alexander was particularly interested in questions of military reorganisation, while he considered questions of civil administration of secondary importance. For instance, when Kiselev depicted the bacchanalia of abuses in Bessarabia, and suggested that its whole administration must go, and recommended that General Inzov be sent there, Alexander quickly remarked that he could not sacrifice such a good general for civil service.

In view of his European policy at that time, Alexander's position was not an easy one. In 1816–17 he set aside the earlier proposed recruitment, but at the same time he did not want to diminish the numbers of his standing army. When it was reported to him that the population was grumbling, since though the war was over the military expenditures did not decrease, Alexander replied with irritation that he could not maintain an army smaller than those of Prussia and Austria combined. In answer to the remark that those states had already dismissed part of their armies, Alexander said that he also "intended" to do so. To his generals who advised him to decrease the army Alexander pointed out that Russia needed a *prépondérance politique,* and that there could be no thought of diminishing the military forces. He was greatly interested, on the other hand, in the question of contracting military expenses and improving the status of the soldiers; he watched closely the military reform in Prussia after she was obliged by the Treaty of Tilsit to maintain not more than forty-two thousand men under arms. As is well known, General Scharnhorst found a clever way out of the difficulty; according to his system every Prussian served three years in the army, after which he was registered in the reserve, to be called from time to time for military exercises;

in this way the population was trained in a short time, and could easily be mobilised in case of need. Thus he increased the actual army several times. Alexander was greatly interested in that idea, but he soon figured out that it was not applicable to Russia, in view of her enormous territory, sparse population, and the total absence of good roads, which would make a rapid mobilisation impossible. In his constant preoccupation with that problem he came in 1810 upon a French work of a certain Servane, which advocated the idea of military colonies on the frontier, engaged in agriculture and at the same time bearing service. The idea appealed to him so much that he at once ordered P. M. Volkonsky to translate the brochure into Russian, in order that Arakcheiev, to whom he decided to entrust the matter, might become acquainted with it. Thus originated the system of military colonies which ultimately brought so much distress. The system consisted in transferring certain territories from the civil to the military department, exempting them from all taxes and dues, and obliging them in lieu of taxes to complete and maintain definite military units. The first application of the system was made in 1810–11 in the province of Mohilev, one of whose *volosts* was settled by the Yeletz infantry regiment, while the native population was transferred to New Russia. In order to lend the colony at once an agricultural character, a special battalion was formed of the married soldiers of the regiment, and their wives and children were arbitrarily brought to them. These married soldiers were to form the basic population of the *volost;* among their houses were distributed the unmarried soldiers who were turned into farm-workers and received their pay from the married soldiers in the form of complete maintenance, like members of their families.

Such was the idea that attracted Alexander in 1810. The first Mohilev colony did not succeed, because at the outbreak of the war of 1812 the Yeletz regiment went to the front, and the whole idea was smothered during the Napoleonic wars.

But in 1816 Alexander decided to renew his attempts to realise that idea. This time the experiment was made in the province of Novgorod in which Arakcheiev had an estate and could therefore better observe the course of affairs in the colonies. An order was given not to transplant the native population, but to transform it directly into military colonists. A whole *volost* was given over to the colony, all its peasants were declared military colonists, and a regiment was distributed among their homes. An incident helped the construction of the colony after a military model: the central village of the *volost* Vysokoie had burned down. Arakcheiev ordered the reconstruction according to a definite plan. The former inhabitants were installed in the mathematically symmetrical farmhouses; their beards were shaved off, they were donned in uniforms, and were ordered to maintain a regiment. Care was taken of their material well-being; they received cattle, horses, and were allowed subsidies and privileges. Among these soldier-farmers were settled prescribed battalions who had become farm-labourers. When bachelor-soldiers married they received separate households, but marriages required the permission of the military authorities. All widows and marriageable girls were kept on record, and marriages were prescribed by the authorities.

Large sums were spent to establish those colonies firmly and in an orderly manner. The life of the colonists was chained by a deadening, pedantic, military system; every household was under the incessant supervision of the authorities; a careless colonist might lose his household and even be banished from the *volost*. Not only the men were subject to military discipline, but even women; at a certain age the children were taken away and schooled as *cantonists* (soldiers' children). In spite of material advantages the population hated the system, for it was bondage, worse than serfdom-bondage.

One must say that Arakcheiev himself was honest in his transactions, and the enormous sums that had passed through

his hands were properly employed; he strictly watched his subordinates. I must warn the reader that there does not exist an impartial biography of Arakcheiev; his rôle and significance are depicted only externally, and the gloomy legends that have gathered around his ominous name are hardly just. Too much hatred, too many bloody memories are connected with that name. Besides, it has been convenient to blame Arakcheiev for everything that was done by the will of Alexander. This was partly due to the censorship conditions under which, until recently, historical works have been written in Russia. Many ascribe to Arakcheiev a pernicious influence on Alexander, and endeavour to explain by that influence the dark features of the last years of his reign; they present Arakcheiev not only as a friend of the Tzar, but as the only friend towards whom Alexander had never changed. In fact Arakcheiev was not so much Alexander's friend, in the true sense of the word, as a faithful slave, regardless of whether his master was Paul or Alexander. He was not stupid, but uncultured; a man of action, diligent, very honest — he did not steal, a rare virtue at that time, and always tried to save a copeck for his master. With all his dog-like devotion — even his fatherland appeared to him as a trifle in comparison with the interests of his master — he had, nevertheless, a sense of honour and ambition. He was merciless, unhuman in his readiness to obey orders; but he also could foretell his master's desires. He was vainglorious, but the chief object of his ambition was to enjoy the unlimited confidence of his master. Of course such a servant is a real treasure for an autocrat, especially one like Alexander who, having grown tired of the tribulations of his reign, was in need of a faithful man capable of looking at things with the eyes of his master. But we can hardly call Arakcheiev a friend of Alexander, and still less may we ascribe to him a moral and political influence on the latter. He was but the executive of the Tzar's policy, and in regard to the military colonies he asserted more than once that

it was not his idea, that he opposed them in the beginning, but since he had undertaken the work he carried it out conscientiously, to the end.

We must say that the military colonies grew and developed with great rapidity, so that by 1825 their Corpus consisted of ninety battalions of infantry in the province of Novgorod and of thirty-six battalions of infantry and two hundred and forty-nine cavalry-squadrons in the Little-Russian colonies. The historian Schilder calls attention to the fact that the work of the military colonies had been carried on in secret, without the interference of the State Council, i.e., against the legal order. Materially the undertaking was apparently a success; the population seemed to thrive, the colonies were self-sustaining and did not buy anything from the outside for the provisioning and clothing of their members. Owing to this Arakcheiev succeeded in saving up a reserved capital of nearly fifty million rubles (Capital of Military Colonies), and he liked to boast of his orderly management. It is noteworthy that many authoritative and relatively independent men of the time gave quite flattering reports about the colonies. Such were the opinions of Count Kochubey after his personal inspection, of the State Comptroller, Baron Kampfenhausen, and even of Speransky, who after his recall from Siberia visited the Novgorod colonies, and finally, of Karamzin. In spite of strict supervision, however, there were later discovered flagrant abuses in some colonies. But what chiefly undermined their importance from the economic point of view, was the account of the fiscal expenditures on that undertaking. In the very first years nearly one million rubles were spent, and one must besides take into consideration the exemption of the colonists from taxes. The very experiment of that peculiar type of state-Socialism deserves a serious, exhaustive study; such a study has not been made as yet. Most of the information we find in literature concerns the uprisings that took place in the colonies at various times. Among the people, at

any rate, there has remained a gloomy memory of that monstrous attempt to place a considerable portion of the country under military bondage.

Alexander's chief care after the Napoleonic wars consisted in the reorganisation of the army by the aid of the colonies-system. In spite of his words to Kiselev in 1816, which he had probably repeated to many persons, about his intention to undertake internal reforms, those words were fulfilled, if at all, by fits and starts, and on an insignificant scale.

Since the Napoleonic wars all the higher administration and even the higher police were concentrated in the Committee of Ministers which, according to Alexander's repeated orders, had to act independently in the absence of the Tzar, and could carry through the most important measures without the monarch's sanction, and with only the confirmation of the president of the Committee. For the post of president N. I. Saltykov was appointed; he whom Catherine had chosen as the chief supervisor of Alexander's education. Now he was a quite infirm old man, and the actual ruler was the director of the Committee, Molchanov.

After the war cases of gross thievery were discovered, mainly in the commissariat, not so much in the army where at the head of this department stood Kankrin, a man of energy and sterling honesty, as in the Ministry of War and in the Committee of Ministers. Alexander, who had been long dissatisfied with the disorder and indolence of the Committee, became indignant at the revelation of spoliations, and ordered a prosecution of Molchanov and the whole Ministry of War with Prince Gorchakov at the head. At the same time he appointed, as an aid to Saltykov, Arakcheiev, who was to report to him personally on the affairs of the Committee. He remained in this position even when after the death of Saltykov, Lopukhin, a person far from senile, was appointed president of the Committee. Thus Arakcheiev had become something like a prime minister, although he

had no portfolio. A strange order was established: Alexander no longer received the ministers with their reports, and never attended the sessions of the Committee. Most of his time he spent in travels through Russia or in attending international congresses abroad. All the matters that required the Emperor's sanction were brought by the ministers before the Committee, and the brief journal of the Committee with the concluding resolutions of Arakcheiev were presented to Alexander. Almost without exception the Tzar agreed with all of Arakcheiev's resolutions. This circumstance made Arakcheiev appear a powerful favourite who was responsible for all the obscurantist measures and repressions of the age. But a close study of the mass of those documents (e.g., in the *Historical Review of the Activity of the Committee of Ministers,* by Seredonin) convinces us that the greater part of them were of secondary importance, and that Arakcheiev's resolutions were not always cruel or repressive; we can rather discover in them a wide-awake watchfulness for the conservation of the fiscal coffers and for the strict fulfilment of the Emperor's ideas. Among Arakcheiev's resolutions were even such that recommended quite just decisions, often more human than those of the Committee. He always tried to decide in a way which would correspond to Alexander's mood. It is natural that under such conditions Alexander trusted the man who relieved him from such affairs as no longer interested him, his mind being occupied with other matters. On this chiefly was based Arakcheiev's reputation as a man who had had an unusual influence on Alexander.

Besides these positions Arakcheiev was chairman of the special committee for the construction of roads, and there he also demonstrated great activity and strict watchfulness, though the results were not brilliant. Then he was chairman of the department of military affairs at the State Council from the moment of its establishment (1810), resigning at that time his post of Minister of War.

CHAPTER XI

AFTER the removal of Speransky and the resignation of the president of the Department of State-Economy, Mordvinov, in 1812, the State Council remained almost idle during the Napoleonic wars; as we know, the Committee of Ministers was the only ruling body. In the absence of any other activity the State Council occupied itself with the discussion of Speransky's plan concerning the new civil and criminal code, his least successful work, as he later himself admitted. The code was based on French models, without sufficient investigation of the history of Russian legislation and of Russian needs. After Speransky's exile the State Council felt freer in criticising his project; they rejected point after point, and finally gave the matter over to a special committee where it remained till the reign of Nicolas I, when it again fell into the hands of Speransky.

In 1816 Admiral Mordvinov was once more invited to the post of president of the Department of State-Economy,[1] and only then the regular work of the State Council, at least in the matter of state-budgets, began. Mordvinov immediately after his reappointment harshly criticised the work of the Minister of Finance, Guriev, especially his financial reports, which lacked clearness and abounded in befogging accounts. About the same time he presented to the State Council his opinion concerning the economic condition of the country, with a detailed criticism of the financial system and suggestions for the improvements. He severely attacked the immoderate issues of assignations which the Committee of Ministers put through secretly during the war, an act

[1] At the same time Speransky was recalled and appointed governor of the province of Pezna.

absolutely against the law; he further appealed for the need of strict economy in every phase of national life, pointing out that the whole country was dissatisfied with the deplorable state of finances, the high cost of living, and general impoverishment. Mordvinov recommended measures analogous to those of Speransky in 1810.

Under the pressure of those attacks Guriev carried through the State Council a series of projects, quite substantial, externally at least, about the renewal of the work of the commission for the extinguishing of state-debts, about the establishment of a special council for credit transactions with the participation of representatives of the merchant-class, and about the founding of a commercial bank. For the first mentioned committee were assigned big sums, and in 1817 for the first time under Alexander, they burned assignations for the sum of thirty-eight million rubles. But the amount of the remaining assignations was still eight hundred million rubles, and the total state-debt exceeded one billion — an enormous sum for that time. Alongside with the payment of debts the Ministry of Finance abolished in 1817 private beverage-contracts, supplanting them with a state-monopoly, but this resulted only in the development of unusual thievery among the officials of that department. At the same time the free-port system was renewed for Odessa, and Berd was granted the privilege of establishing the first steam-ship line in Russia.

All these measures impressed the public favourably, although the cost of living remained very high owing to the low course of the paper-ruble. This last circumstance depended to a large degree upon the liberal changes in the tariff, that were made in 1816, and especially in 1819. I have mentioned that the Minister of Finance had intended to change the tariff in 1813, but the Moscow merchants successfully opposed it. At the Vienna Congress Alexander gave promises to representatives of various Powers to mitigate or abolish tariff-restrictions in Russia. The first mitigating measures were carried through in 1816. The

new tariff removed all prohibitions from foreign trade, and lowered many customs dues, not so much on manufactured goods as on raw material not found in Russia; thus the tariff could not shake the position of Russian industry, but it undoubtedly affected the balance of trade, since imports increased while exports remained stationary. This circumstance kept the course of the paper-money low. In 1819 new serious changes were made in the tariff, lowering customs dues on some manufactured commodities, which caused many Russian factories to reduce or to discontinue their activity.

I have already mentioned that until the nineteenth century the Russian manufacturing industry had satisfied mainly fiscal needs, and most of the factories produced either iron and arms, or cloth and linen for the army and navy. The Possessional cloth-factories were not allowed to sell to private persons, and all their work was limited to supplying the army. Alexander's government hesitated a long time about removing that restriction, in view of the growing needs of the army, but in 1816 the factories were freed from that burden, and the results proved very favourable for the development of industry.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century cotton-mills began to develop. Before the Continental System Russia had imported thread from England, but upon its installation cotton-thread was made in Russia from Central-Asiatic cotton. The cotton-mills appeared to be dangerous competitors for the linen- and canvas-mills; back in 1818 the learned statistician, K. I. Arseniev, considered as the most profitable industry for Russia the manufacture of flax and hemp, i.e., of linen and canvas, which had been largely exported to England for the needs of her fleet.

The tariff of 1819 aroused the vehement opposition of the manufacturers, and they succeeded in bringing forth in 1822 a new protectionist tariff which established for a long time the protectionist principle in the state legislation.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the iron industry remained undeveloped; investigators explain it by the forced labour in the Possessional factories where the bonded workers could not be very productive; another circumstance must be added — the lack of good ways of communication: the transportation of iron from the Ural Mountains was then costlier and more difficult than from abroad. Below are interesting figures about the state of industry during the reign of Alexander, worked out by Professor Tugan-Baranovsky.

In 1804 the number of factories was two thousand four hundred and twenty-three; in 1825 — five thousand two hundred and sixty-one. The number of workers in 1804 was ninety-five thousand two hundred and two; of them forty-five thousand six hundred and twenty-five (48 per cent.) were free workingmen, not bonded and not Possessional. In 1825 there were two hundred and ten thousand five hundred and sixty-eight workers, among them one hundred and fourteen thousand five hundred and fifteen (54 per cent.) free workingmen. The increase in the number of free workers shows that there existed a tendency toward free hired labour among the manufacturers, a circumstance that had played a not unimportant rôle in undermining the bondage-institution by proving it detrimental to the interests of Russian industry.

With the return of society to peaceful occupations the attempts to solve the peasant-question were renewed. In 1816 the question was definitely settled in the Ostsee provinces, very disadvantageously for the peasants. In 1804–5 the conditions had been much more favourable for them, as the landowners were restricted in their power over the peasants' property and of raising their dues. The Ostsee nobility were greatly dissatisfied with the laws of 1804 and 1805, tried to hinder the materialisation of those laws, and in 1811 the Estland nobles presented a new project in which they proposed to free the peasants from bondage altogether, but to deprive them also of their land. The

Government took the bait. After the war Alexander signed the law for the abolition of serfdom in the government of Estland (1816); all the land remained in the hands of the nobles. The peasants became personally free, but were forced to become the economic slaves of their landowners. In 1817 a similar law was decreed for Kurland, and in 1819 for Lifland.

The results greatly tempted the nobles of certain provinces to free their peasants on the same basis. Fortunately the majority of the landowners had not been prepared for such reasoning; in some places (as in the province of Penza) the bondage-system was the most convenient for the exploitation of the estates, and the nobles dreaded the rumours about innovations.

The Government continued to vacillate on the peasant-question. For instance, Alexander gave his own money for the French publication of Academic Storch's course of political economy, which he read to the Grand Dukes, and in which was decisively condemned any forced labour, in particular the bondage system in Russia. But when Storch intended to issue his work in Russian, the censor forbade it. At the same time the learned Professor of the university of Kharkov, Schad, who was recommended to Uvarov by Goethe and Schiller, published in Latin a book in which he expressed views similar to those of Storch; for this he was banished from Russia. In the same year (1816) was issued a very intelligent though reservedly written book by Gribovsky on the position of the landowners' peasants; the book was dedicated to Arakcheiev, and passed the censor safely.

The most popular magazine of the time, *The Spirit of Journals,* had often discussed the question of liberating the peasants, and sharply opposed their liberation without land. But when that magazine printed in 1818 the speech of the Governor-General of Little Russia, Prince Riepnin, in which he urged the nobles of the provinces of Poltava and Chernigov to give their peasants the same conditions that had been proposed for

the Ostsee region in 1804, the speech aroused considerable indignation, and the editor was reprimanded.

Alexander himself undoubtedly continued to think about peasant-reform. When he received through Miloradovich Pushkin's poem, *The Village,* he ordered Pushkin thanked for disseminating noble feelings and views, but the censor again without ceremonies forbade its publication. Alexander was interested in the memorandum of N. I. Turgeniev about rational methods for peasant-reform; he advocated their liberation with land. Another practical plan for the gradual extinction of serfdom was offered by Kankrin, who as Intendant-General of the army had observed the hard conditions of the peasants during his trips through various provinces; Kankrin was also a learned economist, and he prefaced his memorandum with a review of the liberation of the serfs in Western Europe. It is possible that the last memorandum induced Alexander in 1818 to request Arakcheiev for a project concerning the gradual liberation of the peasants; Alexander required that the project should not include "any measures oppressive for the landowners, and particularly that those measures should not appear forced by the Government." Arakcheiev fulfilled his order within those limits. He proposed a simple measure: to spend five million rubles yearly for the redemption of estates from those owners who would be willing to sell them; the peasants were to get two *desiatins*[2] of land per person. Of course Arakcheiev understood that this was not enough, but it was his intention to allow the peasants an incomplete security in order to secure thereby hired labour for the landowners.

There had been many unofficial attempts to accelerate the solution of the peasant-problem. It is worth noting an attempt to form an all-Russian union of landowners for the liquidation of serfdom; among the initiators were Count M. S. Vorontzov, Prince Vassilchikov, the brothers A. I. and N. I. Turgeniev.

[2] A desiatin equals 2.7 acres.— Tr.

Alexander received the founders of the union very dryly, and remarked that there was no use in establishing an all-Russian undertaking; let the landowners act individually on their own estates, but the general treatment of the question belonged to the autocracy. In the official spheres there reigned a marked reactionary attitude towards the peasant-question; it had been manifested in the sessions of the State Council, of the Free Economic Society, and in the utterings of such liberals as Admiral Mordvinov.

The symptoms of the growing reactionary mood after the Napoleonic wars appeared first of all in the activity of the Ministry of Education.

The impulse given in the years 1803–1804 had been strong and fruitful. In 1804 the Government opened five new universities in the country where there had been only one university and almost no primary schools. The aim of the universities was not only to give their students an advanced education, but also to care for the general education in the districts under their supervision. The university Councils enjoyed considerable autonomy, and they successfully carried on the work of organising adequate school systems, and choosing the right personnel. The pedagogical personnel was then quite high, chiefly owing to the invitation of foreign professors (about sixty), although they had to lecture in Latin, French, or German; only half of the professors lectured in Russian.

In view of lack of funds the number of schools did not increase considerably after 1805, but they continued to improve qualitatively. The development of schools was enhanced by abundant private contributions. Such institutions as the Richelieu Lyceum in Odessa, later transformed into a university, or the Lazarev Institute for Oriental Languages in Moscow, were founded on private capital. The state founded in those years the Lyceum in Tzarskoie-Selo, which has played an important rôle in the history of Russian literature and education. That

Lyceum was established as a counter-balance to the prevailing system among the nobles of that time to give their children a domestic education with the aid of private teachers, mostly French emigrants, among whom there had been Jesuits carrying on an active propaganda for Catholicism. The Government tried to prevent that influence by requiring the teachers to hold examinations and by founding the Lyceum as a rival to private pensions.

In the provincial schools the body of pupils was quite democratic. The nobles, accustomed to use the services of foreign tutors, did not favour the state-schools, and therefore were able to accept into their schools commoners' children, and even some of peasant origin, which was against the law. In fact the reluctance of the nobles to make use of the state-schools, which greatly distressed the Ministry of Education, played perhaps a beneficial rôle in spreading education among the lower classes.

The further free development of education was impeded by the infection of the Ministry of Education with mystic tendencies. Among the public the mystic inclination was manifested in infatuation with Freemasonry. But in the governmental spheres those tendencies were expressed in a different form, namely in the energetic activity after the war of the Biblical Society, whose development was largely due to Alexander's sympathy with the views of that quaint institution.

The Bible Society was founded in England in 1804, and its chief aim was the translation of the Bible into all languages, and its sale at a very low price, which was possible owing to the lavish contributions given for the purpose. A branch of the Society was opened in Russia in 1812, and its head soon became the Super-Procurator of the Synod, Prince A. N. Golitzin, a boyhood friend of Alexander, at first a free thinker, but later a believing mystic of approximately the same nature as Alexander had been in the epoch of the Holy Alliance. Like Alexander, Golitzin was impressed with the Baroness Krüdener and with her exalted dim mysticism, with the Quakers, with the Jesuit

Joseph de Maistre, and with Russian "saints" and ascetics of that time. When Golitzin became the head of the Bible Society the governors of the provinces hastened to establish such societies throughout Russia. Golitzin attracted to the Society the heads of the Orthodox church, and when a translation of the Bible into Russian was undertaken its editor became Bishop Filaret, subsequently the famous Metropolitan of Moscow. The aims of the Society, modest and not reactionary in themselves, had acquired a different aspect in Russia, spreading ideas of nebulous mysticism and hypocrisy, particularly among the officials. However, the spread of branches over the country, especially in remote districts, far from the direct supervision of the centre, had some beneficial results, since in their endeavour to popularise the Scripture the branches were inevitably confronted with the problem of preliminary spread of education. The idea of the need of popular education for the understanding of the Bible, originated in the provincial branches, had come to be shared by Golitzin, who decided to establish a net of primary schools and almost succeeded in getting the Government's assignment of two million rubles a year for the purpose, a sum that nearly equalled the whole budget of the Ministry of Education. But soon Golitzin was appointed to replace the Minister of Education, Count A. K. Razumovsky, and one year after the Ministry of Education was merged with the Ministry of Public Worship, according to the project of the Prince.[3] Golitzin surrounded himself with desirable members of the Chief Management of Schools, and added to them a Scholastic Committee, into which entered such persons as the famous Sturdza, the author of the pamphlet against the German universities that

[3] In the manifesto of October 24, 1817, about the establishment of the new Ministry, was said:

"Desiring to have Christian piety as the permanent basis of true enlightenment, we have deemed it useful to unite the work of education with the work of all creeds into one department under the name of the Ministry of Public Worship and Popular education."

served as a signal for their persecution in 1819. Alongside with Sturdza there appeared such hypocrites and bigots as Magnitzky and Runich, who became District Curators and completely smashed the educational system that had recently been introduced with the aid of foreign professors. Soon the obscurantist tendencies were enhanced by the reaction in Germany, that took place after the assassination of Kotzebue by the student Sand, which with the influence of Metternich had deeply impressed Alexander. We must say, however, that Magnitzky's activity in Kazan had preceded the measures of the German reactionaries.[4]

Magnitzky had been one of Speransky's assistants in the Law Committee, and together with him suffered banishment as a dangerous person in 1812, but upon his return from Siberia in 1816 and appointment as governor of Simbirsk he soon showed himself as a thorough reactionary, Mystic, and hypocrite. In 1819 as a member of the Chief Management of Schools he was appointed inspector, and then Curator of the school-district of Kazan. Upon his demand eleven out of the twenty-odd professors were dismissed, and he proceeded to reorganise the whole state of the university of Kazan, interfering with the programme of every course and putting forth absolutely impossible demands. For instance, the course of political economy had to be constructed on the fundamental teachings of the Scripture; the students were transformed into half-*cantonists* (pupils of Arakcheiev's military schools. Tr.), half-novices: they were forced to march, to read and sing prayers in

[4] In fact the first attempts of the Russian reactionaries to turn the tendency of the Ministry of Education in the direction of obscurantism had been made even in the time of the Ministry of Count Razumovsky. The famous Catholic clerical, Count Joseph de Maistre (the former minister from Sardinia, who lived then in Petrograd as a private person), made great efforts in 1810–11 to influence Razumovsky and Golitzin (then the Super-Procurator of the Synod). In the same reactionary spirit though less cleverly and less audaciously, acted the Moscow Curator, P. I. Golenishchev-Kutuzov (1810–1813).

chorus; those who disobeyed were put in cells and wore plates with the inscription "Sinner," after which they had to do penance. Such was the state of affairs in Kazan, but throughout Russia there was marked a sharp reaction in educational institutions, especially in the Scholastic Committee, which was instructed by Sturdza to revise all text-books and inspect the entire pedagogical personnel. Among the exempted books was "Common Moral, or a Book about the Duties of Man," which appeared in 1783 and ran through eleven editions; its authorship has been ascribed to Catherine. Later even such a retrograde as Shishkov, when he became Minister of Education, interceded for the rehabilitation of that book. Even most innocent text-books were put under suspicion.

After the University of Kazan came the turn of Kharkov. There the reoganisation took place after the same manner by the Curator Karnieev, although on a smaller scale: one of the best Russian professors, the mathematician Osipovsky, was discharged, and Professor Schad, as mentioned, was banished abroad; the latter was removed as a follower of a dangerous philosophical doctrine (he was a Schellingian), and for his opposition to serfdom.

This reaction, however, did not at once affect all educational districts; the district of Petrograd, for instance, presented an exception. Its Curator, Count S. S. Uvarov, for a time quite liberal and at any rate a very learned man, had attempted to oppose the reaction, and even carried through in 1819 the reorganisation of the Pedagogic Institute into a university. The fact that Uvarov, an admirer of Karamzin, whose views he later advocated as Minister of Education, appeared as the chief representative of the opposition in the Ministry of Public Worship and Popular Education, shows how extreme had been the reactionary activity of that Ministry. Uvarov, however, had to resign, and his place was taken by the mad obscurantist Runich, also a member of the Scholastic Committee, who began

to do in Petrograd what Magnitzky had done in Kazan. In 1821 he started a persecution of the Professors Raupach, Hermann, Arseniev, and Galich. The first two were foreigners, and they were to be banished abroad, as in the case of Schad; Arseniev was a remarkable statistician, and Galich a distinguished philosopher. The nonsensical persecution of the Professors was prolonged, however, for several years, and it remained for Nicolas in 1827 to order their rehabilitation.

Among the magazines published after the Napoleonic wars the most important was *The Spirit of Journals* issued by Yatzenkov; another popular magazine was *The Son of the Fatherland,* edited by Grech, which supplanted Glinka's *Russian Messenger.* Yatzenkov had been a censor, and he knew how to get by the censorship. Under the rubric of *Thoughts and Judgments by Empress Catherine* he carried on an indirect criticism of contemporary events. The censor pursued him for his attitude towards the old order of government, for his financial and administrative views and especially for his opposition to serfdom.

Formally the Censorship Statute of 1804 was in force, but beginning with 1807 the special censorship of the secret police began to function, parallel with the official censorship of the Ministry of Education. The Secret Committee established in 1807 was to examine all newspapers and magazines, and the newly founded Ministry of Police had the right to confiscate even publications that had been passed by the official censor. Beginning with 1815 the censor did not allow any new publications before getting a preliminary sanction of the Ministry of Police. Razumovsky, who took the place of Zavadovsky as Minister of Education in 1810, expressed views analogous with those of the Ministry of Police, and held that no criticism of persons in the service of the state was permissible; the director of the Ministry of Police, Viazmitinov, demanded on this basis that even criticism of actors on the Imperial stage should be for-

bidden. Yet while under Razumovsky the censorship had a prohibitive, negative character, under Golitzin it began to manifest positive tendencies toward promulgating through books and periodicals a definite reactionary and obscurantist spirit.

However dark was the picture of the condition of education and of the press in the years that immediately followed the end of the Napoleonic wars, still during the years 1816–1820 one could definitely distinguish the tendencies and actions of obscurantists who had triumphed in separate departments, from the ideas of Alexander himself, who in spite of his growing mysticism remained moderately liberal in his attitude towards political questions.

In his speech at the opening of the first Polish Diet in 1818 Alexander requested the representatives of Poland to prove to Europe that "free institutions whose sacred principles some attempt to confuse with destructive teachings are not a dangerous dream; that on the contrary such institutions established with a pure heart for the achievement of a useful and salutary aim are in perfect accord with social order and confirm the well-being of nations." "It is for you," he said, "to prove by experience this great truth. May concord be the soul of your assemblies, and may dignity, coolness, and moderation signify your discussions. . . . In so acting your assembly will gain the approval of your country and those feelings of general respect which are inspired by such institutions when the representatives of a free people do not distort the sacred calling bestowed upon them. . . ."

In the beginning of that speech Alexander said: "The former existence of this order (constitutional. Tr.) in your country has enabled me to grant you at once that which has not ceased to be the object of my cares, and the beneficial influence of this free institution I hope, with the aid of God, to expand on all countries entrusted to my care. Thus you have given me a means to demonstrate to my country that which I have been

preparing for it since long, and which it will enjoy as soon as the foundations for such an important matter will reach the necessary ripeness . . ."

The sessions of the Diet lasted, according to the Constitution, exactly thirty days. In violation of the Constitution, Alexander postponed the presentation of the budget, relying on the confidence of the people, giving as a reason the impossibility of introducing a new financial system before knowing definitely the figures of the national debt, the investigation of which had not yet been finished. The Chamber did not oppose the postponement. Also the Criminal code presented to the Diet by the Government was accepted without discussion. But the Chamber rejected by a large majority the bill concerning marriage and divorce, which disagreed with the established law of the land. In this connection Alexander said in his speech at the closing of the Diet: "Of the bills presented to you only one was disapproved by the majority votes of both Chambers. Inner conviction and frankness dictated this decision. It gratifies me, as I see in it the independence of your opinions. Those who are freely chosen must deliberate freely. Through you I hope to hear a sincere and full expression of public opinion, and only an assembly similar to yours can serve for the Government as a pledge that the published laws are in accordance with the essential needs of the people."

The Warsaw speeches, reprinted and commented upon by the Russian periodicals — the censor was unable to forbid them as they were the speeches of the Emperor himself [5] — made an enormous impression on the Russian reading public. Karamzin, who regarded them negatively, wrote to Dmitriev: "The War-

[5] What had been impossible for the Russian censor in 1818 was actually done in the next century by a more audacious censor. About 1906 there appeared a brochure under the title: "Speeches and toasts by Emperor Nicolas II." There was not a single word by way of comment in the pamphlet. A few days after its publication the censor ordered its confiscation.— Tr.

saw speeches have been strongly re-echoed in the hearts of the young. They see the constitution while asleep and awake; they talk, discuss, even write about it — in *The Son of the Fatherland,* in the speech of Uvarov . . ." Grech's publication had had no stable, definite views, and belonged to the category of newspapers which were later characterised by Shchedrin by the slogan: "What is your request?" Uvarov was then the Curator of the Petrograd district, and in the speech he delivered on the occasion of the reorganisation of the Pedagogic Institute he called political freedom "the latest fair gift of a god," and declared that the dangers and storms which accompany that freedom should not frighten the people: the great gift of freedom is "accompanied with enormous sacrifices and losses, it is gained slowly and is preserved only by steady firmness." As we see, Uvarov understood better than Alexander the inevitable connection between political disturbances and political freedom. On another occasion he remarked about those who hoped to grant enlightenment and at the same time to tender it "harmless," that "they desired fire which should not scald."

Such was the complicated internal policy of Alexander during the fifth period of his reign, when under the influence of the great events the public had developed a profound demand for a radical reconstruction of the social and political order of the state; the period that appeared so trying and unbearable for those who had been imbued with the liberal doctrines of the age and had seen with their own eyes the beginnings of the renascence of Germany and the more democratic structure of the Western European countries. Those ideas found expression in secret societies that had risen since 1816, secret because along with the liberal declarations of Alexander there existed the Ministry of Police which did not permit any criticism of internal affairs. But the impression of Alexander's Warsaw speeches was such that many of the founders of the secret societies hoped that before long their societies would be declared open, legal organisations.

CHAPTER XII

THE aspiration for social activity which appeared among the young army-officers after their return from abroad in the years 1813–14, was manifested in the formation of various organisations, clubs, Masonic orders, literary and educational circles, like the "Arzamas," the "Green Lamp," and others, whose significance in the history of Russian literature is generally known. Soon there appeared also political organisations. In Petrograd two such undertakings were formed at the same time. On one hand, the twenty-four-year-old colonel, Alexander Muraviov, a young man inclined towards mysticism (he occupied a high degree in a French Masonic order), founded a society among the officers of the Semionovsky regiment; on the other hand, a young, brilliant general who had performed important diplomatic tasks during the war of 1814, Mikhail Orlov, made an attempt to attract to the formation of a political Masonic society Count Mamonov (a representative of the old Catherinian Freemasonry which had pursued political aims during Novikov and Schwarz) and Nicolay Turgeniev, who undertook the mission of talking the matter over with several persons, among them with the generals of the Guards, Benkendorf and Vassilchikov. In the provincial towns, among the infantry and artillery regiments, an analogous movement had taken place. Thus Junker Borisov founded a circle of "Lovers of Nature" for young officers, which later developed into the "Society of United Slavs" that subsequently joined the "Southern Society"— the most significant secret organisation in the twenties.

Orlov's attempt had failed, the circle of "Lovers of Nature" had no importance at the beginning, but the undertaking of Muraviov was destined to play a great historical rôle. Here is an outline of its history.

In 1816 several officers of the Semionovsky regiment came together — Lieutenant I. D. Yakushkin, the brothers Sergey and Matvey Muraviov-Apostol, Colonel Alexander Muraviov, and Nikita Muraviov (the son of Mikhail Muraviov, one of the teachers of Alexander I), and decided to form a political organisation. The organisation grew, but had no definite programme or aim, until a new member entered — Pavel Pestel, a young, clever, and energetic adjutant of Prince Witgenstein, who at once gave the society a definite platform. Its aim became the achievement of a constitutional form of government; Pestel borrowed its organisation from the Italian secret societies, the *Carbonari.* The Society, founded by Muraviov and organised by Pestel, was named "The Union of Salvation, or of the Faithful and True Sons of the Fatherland." In general two main types of secret societies were known in Europe at that time: one, the more peaceful, cultural organisation, of the kind of the German *Tugendbund,* whose aim had been the cultural and political revival of Germany, and which worked with the approval of the Government since it had been directed chiefly against the enemy of Germany — Napoleon; on the other hand, in southern Europe worked the *Carbonari,* or as they were called in Greece, the *Hetæriæ,*— typical organisations of conspirators. Pestel chose the type of the *Carbonari,* which corresponded better with his personal character and principles. Most of the founders of the "Union of Salvation" were liberal-minded men who sought better forms of political and social life, but to some degree they were mystics and dreamers; many of them were not yet twenty years of age. Pestel, although also young (he was not yet twenty-four), was a man with quite formed views and definite convictions, and of extraordinary ability and

will-power. He was greatly respected not only by his comrades and friends, but also by his superiors and by all who knew him. His chief superior, the commander-in-chief of the Southern army, Prince Witgenstein, declared that Pestel might the very next day become a minister, or an army-commander, and that he would not fail in any post. Of the same opinion was General Kiselev, then Chief of the Staff of the Southern army. His close comrades — Prince Volkonsky, Yakushkin, and other Decembrists, who left memoirs or testified at the trial of Pestel, spoke about him, of course, with still greater enthusiasm. In a word Pestel was the most remarkable personality among the members of the secret societies. He possessed a big mind, and at the same time also a corresponding temperament; he had an iron will and a colossal ambition which had evidently been one of the moving springs in him alongside with his sincere ideals for common welfare.

It was natural that such a person could sway the vague dreamers on his side, and he had no difficulty in getting the members to accept the *Carbonari* constitution. One of the quaint points of that constitution was the ceremony of terrible oaths that had to be taken at the initiation, not unlike most of the Masonic orders. A more interesting point was the division of the members into various degrees unequal in their rights. At the head of the Society stood the *Boyars,* who were not even to be known (in principle) to the other members; the constitution of the Society was known only to the *Boyars* and to the next degree, the *Men,* but not to the third degree, the *Brothers,* who had to obey blindly the orders of the Society. Finally there was a fourth degree, not members, but sympathisers, *Friends,* who were registered as desirable material, could be recruited into active membership, but might not know either about their registration or their connection with the Society. Such an organisation corresponded with Pestel's Jacobine views which he had developed in himself as an admirer

of the epoch of the Convention and of the revolutionary government in France of 1793.

Pestel had to leave soon after the acceptance of the Constitution for the place of his service, at first in the Ostsee Region, where Witgenstein had been in command of a corps, and from 1818, with the appointment of Witgenstein as commander-in-chief of the Southern army, at Tulchin, a small town on the Moldavian frontier, the headquarters of the army. Among the remaining members of the Society a fermentation soon took place, especially after the acceptance of a new member, Mikhail Muraviov, a man of strong will, who disagreed with Pestel's views and sharply opposed the Jacobine form of the organisation. He categorically refused to bring the oaths at his initiation, and upon reading the Constitution he declared that it was fit for forest-brigands, but not for a cultural society with political aims. There rose discussions and negotiations. About that time a considerable part of the Guards gathered at Moscow on the occasion of erecting a cathedral in memory of the last war, and long debates took place among the members of the Society concerning the differences of opinion that had risen on account of Mikhail Muraviov.

Muraviov and his adherents finally prevailed upon the members to let them work out a new constitution, for which they took as a model that of the *Tugendbund,* published in *Freimüthige Blätter.* Muraviov and his circle translated and adapted it for Russian circumstances, and after many debates it was accepted, and the Society was named instead of "Union of Salvation," "Union of Welfare" (1818). The platform was extremely moderate; the Society was to co-operate with the Government for the betterment of the condition of the people, materially and spiritually; it appealed to the Government for confidence, quoting for the purpose some of Catherine's early liberal aphorisms. In fact the Society acted almost openly, and the Government did not persecute it.

Some suggest that these aims were put forth only for appearance, and that there was a second part of the constitution, of a purely political nature. But that second part, the preparation of which was turned over to Nikita Muraviov, had not been finished; it had been discussed by some of the leaders, but had not been accepted by the Union, or even by the central organ. As they did not propose to pursue any conspiratory aims, the members acted openly along cultural-educational lines, and all knew their constitution, the so-called "Green Book."

The activity of the "Union of Welfare" was grouped in four branches. The first was *philanthropic,* i.e., it comprised succour for needy mankind. In practice this activity could be then expressed particularly in the improvement of peasant-conditions, the more so since most of the members (if not all) were landowners. But although the constitution of the *Tugendbund* forbade the members to have slaves, the constitution of the "Union of Welfare" advocated only a kind treatment of one's serfs. The chief worker for the improvement of the serfs in the Union had been N. I. Turgeniev.

The second branch of activity was *educational,* and in this respect the members worked chiefly among the army. The most active in that field had been General M. F. Orlov, the one who had long ago dreamt about founding a secret political society. As a commander of a division he aided the wide spread of Lancasterian schools both among his regiments and among the population with which his division had come in contact. Orlov contributed personally and collected large sums for the educational work. In 1818 he wrote, for instance, that he had collected sixteen thousand rubles. N. I. Turgeniev asserted that Orlov had given all his salary for education.

The third branch consisted in the work for *the betterment of justice* in Russia. In this respect the activity of the Society could be best expressed in the working out of projects for the new courts. This work fell also to Turgeniev who served as a

state-secretary at the State Council. Many members had the idea that in order to effect an immediate improvement of justice they should have resigned their military positions and entered the service in lower courts, e.g., in Aulic courts. Some of them did so. Pushkin's close Lyceum-friend, I. I. Pushchin, accepted the post of Aulic judge at Moscow. Ryleiev did likewise, even before his becoming a member of the Society.

Finally, the fourth branch, the *economic,* cared for the economic and financial improvement of national affairs. The work consisted largely in publishing books on the question. As a monumental work of that activity we have Turgeniev's remarkable *Essay on the Theory of Taxation.* Turgeniev had intended together with Professor Kunitzin to issue a monthly, but he was not allowed to do so, in spite of his being a state-secretary at the State Council and a director of one of the departments in the Ministry of Finance.

In spite of the increase in membership (in 1819 the Society had two hundred members), the activity of the Union was rather indolent and appeared to many as too lukewarm, considering the growing dissatisfaction with the Government's policy of repressions, obscurantism, and the hateful Military Colonies. There was felt a need for a more revolutionary organisation. Some of the members had long been inclined toward more vigorous action. Thus in 1817, Yakushkin volunteered to assassinate Alexander, when the "Union of Salvation" had received a letter from Prince Trubetzkoy about the circulating rumours of Alexander's intention to move his throne to Warsaw, and similar nonsense. The question of regicidism was not carried out in practice, but the episode illustrates certain moods among the members.

In 1820 Pestel was in Petrograd, and took part in a gathering at the house of F. N. Glinka, the adjutant of the Governor-General of Petrograd, Miloradovich. The discussion turned to the question, Which form of government was preferable: a

republic or a constitutional monarchy? Pestel categorically advocated a republic, and finally had the question voted upon; all but one expressed themselves for a republic. True the decision had only a theoretical value, but Pestel considered it more serious, and later tried to ascribe to it the significance of a formal resolution.

In the same year there took place in Petrograd an event which, although not caused by the activity of the "Union of Welfare," was reflected in the fate of all secret societies (among them the Masonic orders); this was the mutiny among the soldiers of the Semionovsky regiment, which was not influenced by the officers. The regiment had been treated before quite humanly; most of the officers were liberals, and belonged to the "Union of Welfare"; the commander was a good-hearted man, General Potiomkin. In 1820 the commandership passed to Colonel Schwarz, a rude despot, inclined to harsh reprisals; in his intention to bring the regiment under his subjection, he ordered flogged several cavaliers of the order of St. George, who were exempt by law from such punishment. Several companies rose in mutiny. It had a rather mild form: the soldiers wished to ask Schwarz not to employ such measures in the future. The officers — among them S. I. Muraviov-Apostol — tried to dissuade them, understanding that the soldiers would achieve no results; but their arguments were of no avail, and in the end the whole regiment was imprisoned in the fortress. This circumstance made an enormous impression on Alexander. He was at that time at the Leibach Congress. The mutiny took place synchronously with another unpleasant event — the sessions of the second Warsaw Diet in 1820, which rejected all the bills introduced by the Government after a series of sharp, oppositional speeches. To these were added the news about the revolution in Naples, which formed the subject of discussions at the Congress. All these circumstances worked on Alexander's mood, so that the "mutiny" of the Semionovsky regi-

ment made a tremendous impression upon him, the more so since he had personally commanded it at one time, and had been very fond of it. He refused to believe that the regiment rose up without the agitation of secret leaders. The regiment was dispersed among various military parts. The event had two consequences. On one hand the scattered officers and soldiers formed excellent cadres of revolutionary propagandists throughout the Empire; on the other hand, in view of the tense mood of the Government, the "Union of Welfare" decided to disband, and in January, 1821, the chairman of the Moscow sessions of the Union, N. I. Turgeniev, sent out circulars to all the members about the closing up of the Society.

An opinion exists that the Society decided to disband only for the sake of appearance, in order to deceive the Government's vigilance, and to continue their activity in a more conspirative form. This could hardly have been the idea of the majority of the members. At any rate, in Petrograd the Society actually ceased to exist.

Upon his return from abroad Alexander received a detailed report about the activity of that Society through the treacherous Vassilchikov. True the Emperor remarked that he would not punish individuals who held the same liberal ideas which he had himself advocated in the first years of his reign, but he remained nevertheless greatly distressed over the state of mind among the Guards, and ordered them sent to the western frontier in 1821, and then purposely prolonged their stay for one year and a half in Lithuania, evidently believing that the Petrograd atmosphere acted detrimentally upon the young officers. Thus the main elements of the Society were removed from the capital.

But when the delegates of the Moscow conference arrived at Tulchin with the report about the disbandment of the Society, the southern members, headed by Pestel and Yushnevsky (the Intendant-General of the Southern army), declared that they

would not disorganise, and their branch became an independent Society which reintroduced Pestel's former constitution of the "Union of Salvation," and put forth definitely political and revolutionary aims. The Society strove for the establishment of a republic in Russia by Jacobine means.

The Southern Society was organised in the form of three boards. The central board was at Tulchin under the management of Pestel and Yushnevsky, who were elected as the chief directors of the Society; the whole power was actually in the hands of Pestel. Then there were two branches, one in Kamenka under the management of a local landowner, a retired colonel, V. Davidov, and of the commander of the infantry brigade that was stationed there, General Prince S. G. Volkonsky; and another branch at Vassilkov under the management of Sergey Muraviov-Apostol who acted somewhat independently of Pestel, and made his chief assistant a young officer (also of the Semionovsky regiment), Mikhail Bestuzhev-Riumin.

Pestel had constantly put before his comrades the necessity not only of regicide but of the annihilation of the entire Imperial family; on this question dissensions always took place between him and Muraviov-Apostol. The conferences of the leaders occurred once a year at Kiev during the fair, in 1822, '23, '24, and 1825; the question about means for the destruction of the reigning House was discussed every time, but the final resolution had been postponed from conference to conference.

Although Pestel had put forth such radical aims, he acted coolly and cautiously, weighing and discussing every step with much deliberation. Sergey Muraviov-Apostol was, on the contrary, impatient and inclined to be enthusiastic and quick; though he could not bear the thought of annihilating a whole family, he yet demanded a prompt beginning of action, and always aspired to raise a revolt, even for insignificant causes, as the dismissal of an officer. His assistant, Bestuzhev-Riumin, was of a still more ardent and quick temperament. He actively propagated

his views, and succeeded in accomplishing two big things. He discovered the existence of an independent "Society of United Slavs," whose aim was the establishment of a federative republic of all Slav nations; he persuaded them to join the "Southern Society." He also entered into negotiations with the Polish revolutionary organisations, and discussed with them at length whether they would consent to be guided by the Russian revolutionary plans, and whether they would arrest or kill, if so demanded, Grand Duke Constantine. The Poles answered those questions rather evasively, evidently not trusting the firmness and discreetness of the Russian organisations very much. Bestuzhev tried to throw dust into their eyes by exaggerating the dimensions of the Russian plot. Pestel interfered, and took part in the discussions about the limits within which Poland should be restored. The Poles of course demanded the frontiers of 1772, but Pestel declared definitely for the restoration of an ethnographical Poland only (not including, i.e., the Little-Russian and Lithuanian elements).

At the same time Pestel employed energetic measures for the revival of the secret Society in Petrograd. He kept sending his emissaries (Prince S. G. Volkonsky, Matvey Muraviov, Alexander Podgio, and others) there, and in 1824 he went there himself. With his efforts the Society did come to life again, but he was unable to make the members of that "Northern Society" follow his plans and obey his will: the Northerners had by that time developed independent views, which differed greatly from Pestel's. The "Northern Society" was resurrected in 1822, upon the return of the Guards. A new board was elected consisting of Nikita Muraviov, Prince S. P. Trubetzkoy, and N. Turgeniev, but the latter declined and was supplanted by a young officer, Prince Eugene Obolensky. Nikita Muraviov worked out a constitution which differed in many points from that of Pestel.

Muraviov's Constitution, on one hand, and Pestel's Consti-

tution, under the name of "Russian Justice"[1] or "State Testament," on the other, presented two rival currents among the revolutionary circles. Pestel demanded a republican form of government; he had been influenced by Destutt de Tracy, the famous French commentator of Montesquieu's *L'esprit des lois,* and advocated his view about the incompatibility of a monarchical régime with the will of the people. Admitting that Russia was not ready for a republic, Pestel intended to overthrow the existing order by a military *coup d'état,* and to organise a military dictatorship as a temporary government which would prepare Russia for a republican order in some eight or ten years. This would naturally lead to a military-despotic régime, since the realisation of the plan would involve the suppression of a series of contre-revolutions.

Moreover, the very republic projected by Pestel was of a clearly Jacobine type, with a strong centralised administration. The legislative power was to belong to a *vieche* (a common council), but the whole administration was to be concentrated, after the model of the French Directory, in the hands of five Directors. Pestel did not allow any local autonomy, but desired to unite all the Empire into one politically uniform whole; he intended to incorporate Finland, and to allow Poland to separate only under the condition of establishing a socio-political order similar to that in Russia. Pestel did not consider linguistic or religious differences: the Russian language and Church were to be dominating. He intended to interfere with the internal life of the Mahomedans, and to abolish the subordination of their women. The Jews Pestel considered harmful exploiters of the peasants, and planned to transplant them all to Palestine, for which purpose he was to give them military aid.

[1] He borrowed that name from the ancient code of laws established in Russ early in the eleventh century by Prince Yaroslav. The word *pravda* signifies in Russian both justice and truth, or right and verity. — Tr.

Thus Pestel's views were not too liberal; but his democratic principles were deeply promulgated in his plan, especially in the economic region. His agrarian plan was original, democratic, and consequential. He planned to divide all lands into two categories: one, social, should be in communal possession of the people, the other, fiscal, could be exploited by the state or be distributed by the Government to private persons. At any rate Pestel considered that land could not be an object of private property, but should serve primarily for the provision of the masses.

As to the Constitution of the "Northern Society," worked out by Nikita Muraviov, it was monarchical. Many of their members, and Nikita himself, admitted that a republic was better than a monarchy, but they saw no hope for accomplishing such a form of government. This Constitution included the principles of the most radical constitutions of that time; as its model the Spanish constitution of 1812 had evidently served. The first paragraph of Muraviov's Constitution definitely declared that the Russian Empire could not be the property of a certain family. The will of the people was to be supreme. The Monarch's power was very limited. The *vieche* was to have not only all legislative powers, but could even declare war, peace, and amnesty — usually monarchical privileges. Another distinct feature of Muraviov's Constitution was Federalism, with a large provincial autonomy, as against Pestel's centralised republic. Muraviov's monarchy was divided into thirteen (fifteen, in the second edition of the Constitution) autonomous provinces, each of which was to have its own *Duma,* subject, of course, to the direction of the central authority.

Such were the two main currents that existed at that time among the revolutionary societies in Russia. Their difference lay not so much in the question of republic or monarchy, as in the means for the accomplishment of the aim: whether by a Jacobine way, or by way of submitting to the will of the people.

Ryleiev, who became at the beginning of the year 1825 the dominant force in the "Northern Society," declared that in principle one might prefer a republic, provided the people consented to it. Thus the chief opposition of the "Northern Society" to Pestel's plans was directed against his intention to establish a republic by all means, even against the will of the people. In this sense Ryleiev and Nikita Muraviov were true *Narodovoltzy*.[2] The views of the revolutionary circles found reflection, naturally, in the views of the broad layers of society.

[2] The revolutionary party, "The Will of the People," which operated during Alexander II's reign, and by whose decree that Tzar was assassinated in 1881.— TR.

CHAPTER XIII

TURNING to the activity of the Government in the last years of Alexander's reign, we must first of all admit that it was one of the darkest periods in Russian history. The Government decidedly repudiated any idea of liberal reforms.

Alexander's own mood had definitely changed after 1820. We have seen that up to that time despite his growing mysticism and increasing hatred for any form of revolution, he still had a warm sympathy for liberal institutions and for a constitutional order. Metternich, in whose eyes there had always existed a close connection between liberalism and revolutions, vigorously opposed Alexander's views at all international congresses, considering him a Utopianist and a romantic, and at times ascribed Alexander's liberalism to his masqued ambitious plots.

But in 1820 the incident with the Semionovsky regiment occurred, and Alexander falsely interpreted it as a result of revolutionary propaganda; then came the oppositional attitude of the Polish Diet; and finally the revolutionary fermentation in Western Europe had broken out in the Neapolitan and Spanish revolutions. All these events combined had shaken Alexander's conviction that liberal institutions and revolution were different matters; he observed how in the Twenties liberals and revolutionists worked hand in hand against reactionary governments which had broken their obligations and promises to the people.

In view of these changes, there was formed a complete *entente cordiale* between Alexander and Metternich, a perfect concord in their hostility to all the popular movements of that time. It was then that the "Holy Alliance," formed by Alex-

ander in 1815, had become a union of monarchs against freedom-craving nations. Alexander tried to be extremely consequential in that policy, and for this reason he formally sided with the Sultan against his rebellious subjects, the Greeks, despite his personal sympathies and public opinion in Russia and the views of his mystical friends, such as Baroness Krüdener. This was demonstrated so sharply that Alexander's chief assistant in foreign affairs, Count Capo d'Istria, a Greek by origin, had to resign his post, while General Prince Alexander Ypsilanti who took active part in the Greek revolt was formally excluded from Russian service, although inwardly Alexander approved of Ypsilanti's activity, and did not conceal his opinion from his entourage. If, in spite of such a policy, the relations between Russia and Turkey were quite unstable at that time — one moment war was but a hair's distance away, and the Russian ambassador thought best to ask for his papers and depart — it was due to the fanatical actions of the Porte instigated by the British ambassador, Stratford.

In his internal policy Alexander demonstrated his new mood only negatively — in his rejection of all liberal undertakings and his absolute indifference to any reforms. · He concentrated his interests in military administration, particularly in the Military Colonies which continued to grow rapidly, against public opinion and in spite of the protests of the peasants who were turned into Colonists. At the same time Alexander's mysticism reached its climax; he was gloomy and sought self-forgetfulness in frequent and rapid travels over Russia. He fell under the influence of persons far inferior to Baroness Krüdener and the English Quakers — of such black bigots as Archimandrite Fotiy, who had risen from the position of a bible-instructor in a military school by the aid of his devoted admirer, Countess Orlov-Chesmensky, and partly also by the aid of Arakcheiev and Prince Golitzin, the famous Minister. In regard to Golitzin, Fotiy, perhaps urged by Arakcheiev, displayed in the end insolent hos-

tility, anathematising him for his alleged leniency towards non-Orthodox creeds and mystic sects. In spite of Alexander's personal friendship for him, Golitzin was forced to resign. The Ministry then fell apart; ecclesiastical matters were again transferred to the Super-Procurator of the Synod, Prince Meshchersky; Admiral Shishkov, the man who carried on a controversy with Karamzin about the inviolability of the ancient Russian style, and who later composed patriotic manifestoes in the name of Alexander, and read for him passages from the Prophets, was appointed Minister of Education. Under Shishkov, Magnitzky and Runich remained in power for some time. Magnitzky, having accomplished the ravage of the university of Kazan, undertook the working out of a new censorship-statute for which he strained all his reactionary inventiveness. The Statute was published during the next reign and did not last long.

Still, in spite of the domination of reactionism at that period, the Government undertook no persecution of the revolutionary organisations, which led many to believe that it had been ignorant of their existence. It is well established at present that from 1821 Alexander had been informed about every step of the secret Societies. We have noted his argument against persecuting those who held his own former views, in his answer to the information of Vassilchikov. Evidently his conscience was against taking strict measures to suppress the growing unrest. Espionage had rapidly developed by that time, but it bore an academic aspect; the Government knew that the "Southern Society" was plotting against it, yet the conspirators were not disturbed. Only in his last year Alexander gave some attention to the information of the sub-officer, Sherwood, about the "Southern Society"; Sherwood was instructed by Arakcheiev to obtain additional information. When already in Taganrog Alexander became somewhat alarmed by Sherwood's additional information, and by the new report of Captain Maiboroda, one of Pestel's subordinates. General Chernyshev was sent to the

Southern army with an order to arrest the leaders of the Society and begin an investigation. It is hard to say what would have happened had Alexander not died then, but we may presume that the persecution of the conspirators would not have had the cruel forms in which it was expressed under Nicolas, after the insurrection of December 14.

In regard to Poland Alexander's reactionary mood was expressed in his failure to convene the Diet for five years, and in another anti-Constitutional act — his ordering the sessions of the Diet of 1825 to be closed to the press and the public, except the opening and closing sessions. He said at that time that he considered the Constitution of 1815 an experiment, and evidently felt at liberty to withdraw it at any moment. The Diet of 1825 passed more quietly than that of 1820, externally at least; but the revolutionary ideas had developed in Poland as strongly as in Russia, and if they found full expression only in the insurrection of 1830, their fermentation undoubtedly had taken place under Alexander.

The only branch of the administration where order began to rule at that time, was the Ministry of Finance, after the appointment, by the recommendation of Arakcheiev, of Kankrin in place of Guriev. The activity of the honest, economical, and learned Kankrin was displayed mainly during the reign of Nicolas; when he was appointed, in 1823, financial affairs were in a deplorable state. The economic condition of the population was at its worst; taxes were collected with great difficulty; landowners, who were responsible for their peasants, were frequently placed under "wardship" (receivership) for failing to pay the taxes, and Fiscal peasants suffered forced sales of their houses and property. In the last years of Alexander's reign the western region suffered from crop-failures and famines, with which it was difficult to cope in view of the bad roads. The building of roads went on without any plan or system, by way of "natural obligation" that lay hard on the back of the

peasantry. Sometimes whole villages were driven out to perform the "natural obligation" hundreds of miles from their homes, very often in summer, during field-labour time.

The taverns flourished under the fiscal monopoly; the people left there their last copecks. Yet the beverage-income of the state had decreased, owing to the extraordinary thievery of the officials; this feature — official thievery and abuses — had reached its climax in those years, according to the unanimous testimony of all contemporaries.

Thus ended the reign that in its beginning had aroused such bright hopes.

In casting a retrospective glance at the epoch we have now passed, we cannot help being astonished — at least from the first, superficial examination, at the comparatively meagre results of the enormous expenditures and sacrifices of the whole nation: Russia at the end of Alexander's reign seemed — externally — not far advanced in the conditions of her state and social life from the times of Catherine, of Novikov, and Schwarz. There still remained the autocracy above, serfdom below, and the reign of anarchy among administrators and landowners. Military Colonies had come to be; popular education that had progressed so well at the beginning of the reign, was now suppressed, distorted, and maimed by obscurantist and reactionary measures of clericalists and fanatical mystics; the press was reduced to zero, and it appeared that all legal and peaceful ways for the free development of society were cut off. . . .

But such a conclusion about the results of Alexander's reign would be true only from the external, formal, side; a careful retrospective view at the inner meaning of the events we have been studying and at their inner connection, will prove the incorrectness of such a conclusion.

By the time of Alexander's accession the process of the formation of a state-territory had been accomplished, at least in its

general features. The struggle for territory no longer presented an essential task of the Russian state, consequently the Government was able to turn its attention to the internal needs of the population. Even under Catherine there began to take form a considerable centre of thinking society, in which aspirations for working out independent views and some political ideals were manifest. Towards the end of her reign liberals and democrats stood in opposition to the Government, and suffered persecution. Under Paul those persecutions and the unbridled despotism of the authorities had reached unbelievable dimensions, and gave the whole of Russian educated society an impulse to think and feel the importance of practical guarantees against governmental despotism. Upon the removal of Paul the public fell into careless joy and rosy optimism, full of confidence in the new Monarch who declared his intention of granting his land "legally-free" institutions, and of later withdrawing to private life. But he was an inexperienced youth who knew neither the country nor himself; by the aid of his friends — councillors whom the conservatives of the time unjustly named "a Jacobine band"— Alexander became convinced of the great difficulty of realising his dreams and political plans. At the same time he became interested in the great events of Western Europe, and discovered in himself an inclination and vocation for diplomacy. As a result, the state-reforms of his first five years did not go further than the institution of the ministries and the very moderate reform of the Senate. The most important obstacles for a progressive movement were found to be: Serfdom, the liquidation of which was difficult without preparation, and the almost total absence of education among the people. For the removal of the last obstacle much had been done in the first years of Alexander's reign which are justly considered the most brilliant epoch in the history of Russian education in the nineteenth century. During the same period, owing to external and internal peace, Russian commerce and industry flourished very

markedly. The first measures for the improvement of the peasant-life were also inaugurated and, in the Ostsee region — for the limitation of the landowners' power.

The wars of 1805–07, the defeat of the Russian armies, and the complete subjugation of their allies by Napoleon, had enormous consequences for the further course of Russian affairs: Russia could no longer stand aloof from the events that took place in Western Europe, and was forced by Alexander's policy to participate to the end in those affairs. The Treaty of Tilsit placed Alexander in a difficult position. He was not so vain as to be flattered for a moment with the rôle of the only equal ally and friend of the great conqueror of Europe. He was little attracted by Napoleon's proposal to divide between them the dominion of the world; moreover, he knew how to value Napoleon's words and suggestions, and the necessity of concluding a close alliance with a man whom a few months before he had declared from church pulpits to be the enemy of Christendom and of all mankind, was not very pleasant for him. At Tilsit he acted in direct opposition to the thoughts and aspirations of his people; the Continental System had added to Russia's moral humiliation also material ruination. Those conditions weakened and almost destroyed the popularity which Alexander had theretofore enjoyed in his country; they had also forced many minds to turn for the first time to political questions, and to stand in conscious opposition to the Government. Men of such opposite views as Karamzin and Speransky testified alike about the dissatisfaction of Russia. The unrealised reconstruction of Speransky could not improve matters, and his financial plan, also, in a large measure, not carried out, with all its merits, only helped to open the public's eyes to the evils of the former and subsequent financial policy, and on the inevitability of further ruin, from which the country could no longer be saved either by the abrogation of the Continental System or by the beneficial tariff of 1810.

This extremely tense and difficult situation was relieved by the War of 1812. Although the terrible sufferings and sacrifices caused by that war had devastated the most developed part of the country and had ruined almost irretrievably a large portion of the landowners' wealth, the results appeared redeeming in the eyes of the population. The people stood the test heroically, and the War of 1812 proved the power of Russia's national consciousness and firmness. If the consequences of the Tilsit Treaty and of the Continental System had been important for the formation of a critical and oppositional attitude in the public, the consequences of Russia's participation in the Napoleonic wars and in the overthrow of Napoleon were immeasurably more important for all the further development of Russian life. They were enormous, appeared in various spheres and currents, and have in various ways helped the acceleration of the decay and liquidation of the established social and political order. Later in the matter of the abolition of serfdom we shall see more clearly the importance of the ruin and indebtedness of the landowners. On the other hand, I have already noted the significance of the fact that a mass of young, educated, and susceptible representatives of Russian society had been present in Western Europe at the very moment of the reorganisation of that society, and had had an opportunity of getting acquainted with all sides of European life, owing to the length of their stay there; many had stayed on even after the conclusion of peace, during the three years' stay of Vorontzov's occupational corps in France. That circumstance had prepared the formation of the secret societies of the first and second decades of the nineteenth century. We have seen how after the wars the public once more put their hopes in Alexander's reformatory activity, the more so since he had confirmed his liberal views through the constitutions that were given by him or by his intercession to Poland, Finland, France, and Sweden. We have also seen how Alexander had for the second time disappointed those expectations, expectations no longer of the naïve

nature that they possessed at the beginning of his reign; we have seen how, carried away by his rôle in the destinies of all nations, he was unable to devote sufficient attention to the needs and interests of Russia's internal life, where the activity of the Government expressed itself now in the establishment of Military Colonies, and in the distortion of the whole system of popular education.

In the last period of Alexander's reign, when he became disappointed in the possibility of a peaceful development of liberal institutions and constitutional principles, and when between him and Metternich had been established a complete *entente cordiale* in foreign affairs, while in the internal affairs there had grown a deep gulf between him and the thinking public,— then the last hope for achieving a mitigation of the Government's despotism in a peaceful way had disappeared, and the secret societies which had had no definitely revolutionary character at their formation, grew rapidly outspokenly revolutionary.

Alexander's biographer, Schilder, asserts that had not Alexander died on November 19, 1825, at Taganrog, one could have expected by some imperceptible signs a new turn in his views and mood, and that he would perhaps have been able to bring Russia out of the state of internal disruption into which he had hurled her in the end. I do not think so. In my opinion Alexander had accomplished all he could, and in this respect he died in time. Had he not died he would have abdicated rather than launch out on a new course. In a fatal way he had destroyed for himself the possibility of a consequential and regulated leadership of Russia on the way of progress and fundamental improvement of her state, destroyed it by being carried away with the chance for participation in the world-events of his time. But it is very probable that had he not done so, had he not dragged Russia into war with Napoleon in 1805, had he been able to continue the peaceful (in fact, hesitating) way in which he led the country at the beginning of his reign — he would have after all not

accelerated but rather retarded the process of internal development in Russia. With his unpreparedness, inexperience, lack of faithful co-workers, and under the conditions in which Russia had been then, that process would have taken a very long time. The shocks that followed the wars of 1805–1807, and that aroused the public from its former passive-optimistic state; the economic and material jolts that came as a result of the Tilsit Treaty and the War of 1812; the great moral acquisitions which Russian society had made during the Napoleonic wars — served, I think, as more potent factors in the socio-political process of Russia's development in the nineteenth century. Great changes took place in the course of that process after the Napoleonic wars under the influence of the events of Alexander's reign; the importance of those changes will appear clearer to us when we shall get acquainted with the circumstances of Russia's development in the following thirty years.

In summarising the reign of Alexander, it may be not useless to consider a few facts and figures.

In regard to the state-territory, in spite of the fact that the country did not need any territorial expansion, of which Alexander himself was well aware, during his reign the territorial acquisitions were enormous. First of all, Gruzia came voluntarily under Russian dominion, trying to save herself from Persia. This peaceful annexation provoked, however, a war with Persia and with the warlike mountaineers of the Caucasus; as a result, by the end of Alexander's reign there were conquered considerable lands west and east of Gruzia, which pushed the frontiers of Russian Trans-Caucasia to the shores of the Black and Caspian seas. This occasioned a long war for the complete conquest of the Caucasus, that was ended only under Alexander II.

Next there were annexed the Kirghiz lands, namely, Ust-Urt (between the Caspian and Aral seas) and the enormous Akhmolinsk region, in space as large as any secondary European Power.

Then Bessarabia was annexed; strictly speaking, its possession was by no means necessary for Russia. Earlier still Finland had been conquered. Possibly this conquest, especially of the shores of the Gulf of Finland, was indeed necessary strategically for the organisation of an adequate defence of Petrograd in case of war with Sweden or England; but Finland was annexed as far as the Arctic Ocean, i.e., in absolutely superfluous limits.

Finally the Kingdom of Poland, whose fate has been so closely knit with the course of Russian social movements, was annexed.

Thus we see that the territorial acquisitions were very large. The annexation of those frontier-lands has brought out during the nineteenth century the race-question, which had not existed to any marked degree before. Even in Alexander's time the national question had been widely discussed and differently solved among intellectual circles, particularly among radicals: Pestel decided it centralistically, while Nikita Muraviov was inclined toward Federalism. Naturally enough, Karamzin considered the question from a nationalistic point of view, undoubtedly the most popular view at that time.

In regard to ways of communication which should unite the enormous territory, at the beginning of Alexander's reign much had been done for the development and improvement of waterways, by a net of canals; this circumstance has had a great importance for the development of the transportation of raw material to ports for export abroad, but for internal communication the canals had but a secondary significance.

Land-roads were built without system; the slowness of communications remained as before: for instance, the news of Alexander's death reached Petrograd only on the eighth day, with all the hard riding of couriers.

As to the population, its growth, as we have seen, had vacillated considerably. During the first five years of the century there was an increase of two million six hundred thousand per-

sons of both sexes; in the next five years, an increase of two million one hundred thousand, but in the following five years, in view of the wars and epidemics, the increase amounted only to one million four hundred and ninety-five thousand; in the five years after the war the population increased by three million one hundred and forty-nine thousand, and in the following five years, by three million one hundred and seventy-four thousand. In the last five years the growth of the population was checked by the failure of crops, which caused epidemics and famines.

Industry developed, on the whole, considerably, though it often met with strong obstacles. The brilliant period of its development was in the first years of the reign, when it breathed freely after the régime of Paul. Then came the time of the first Napoleonic war and the Continental System which destroyed the normal course of the industrial development, although it aided, in part, the development of cotton-thread production, since in the absence of thread imported from England Russia began to produce it from cotton imported from Central-Asiatic Khanates.

After the tariff of 1810 the manufacturing industry began to develop quite rapidly, but later it was checked by the liberal tariffs of 1816 and 1819, and only after the tariff of 1822 the protectionist legislation again aided its development.

As to commerce, as a consequence of those constant changes in the custom-tariffs, that occurred in connection with the Government's cares for a favourable balance of trade, and because of the wars,— it underwent big shocks, from which foreign trade suffered most.

PART TWO

CHAPTER XIV

BY the time of the accession of Nicolas, the Government was in a quite complicated and even threatening situation. We have seen that from the beginning of Alexander's reign a mass of problems had accumulated, the solution of which was impatiently awaited by that part of Russian society which, after the Treaty of Tilsit and the Continental System, had become accustomed to an oppositional attitude, and had acquired definite political views after the contact with Western Europe during 1813–15. Those views were in direct opposition to the reactionary-obscurantist tendency of the Government at the end of Alexander's reign. We have observed how bitter dissatisfaction had developed among the progressive *intelligentzia,* and how it was expressed in the form of a conspiracy which had radical revolutionary aims.

Owing to casual circumstances, that revolutionary movement ended in the premature and unprepared explosion of December 14, 1825 — an explosion which allowed the government of Nicolas to liquidate and suppress the movement by cruel repressive measures. As a result the land was deprived of the best, most alive and original representatives of its progressive, thinking society, the remaining members of which were intimidated and terrorised by the repressions, while the Government throughout the reign of Nicolas found itself entirely divorced from the intellectual forces.

More important and difficult than the political and administrative tasks that loomed before Nicolas, were the socio-economical tasks that under the influence of the general de-

velopment of the social process in Russia, whose course was sharpened and accelerated by the Napoleonic wars, had ripened by the time of his accession. The development of that process continued to advance and grow acute during the reign of Nicolas, and brought it in the end to a crisis, under the influence of a new external stimulus — the unhappy Crimean Campaign, which moved to the front with a fatal inevitability the period of the great reforms of the Fifties and Sixties.

We are now to study the events and facts in which the course of that process had been manifested.

The accession of Nicolas took place under quite exceptional conditions caused by the unexpected death of Alexander and by his strange orders in regard to the succession. By the law of 1797, issued by Paul, if the emperor left no son he was to be succeeded by his next brother. As Alexander left no children at his death, the throne should have been occupied by his brother, Constantine. But in the first place Constantine had a natural dislike for reigning, as he had declared on many occasions; then his family circumstances placed some obstacles in the way of his accession. In 1803 his first wife left him and Russia, and after having obtained a divorce, Constantine married for the second time, the Polish Countess, Jeannette Grudzinsky, who received the title of Illustrious Princess Lovich. The marriage was morganatic, and Constantine in contracting it acted as if he gave up his rights of succession. The circumstances had thus pointed out the possibility of the transference of the throne-rights to Constantine's younger brother. Yet Constantine had kept up to the death of Alexander the title of heir and Tzesarevich. Although Nicolas in later years often remarked that he had not expected to reign, the probability of his succession had been quite evident to all. Alexander himself openly hinted to Nicolas in 1812 that he would have to reign, and in 1819 he frankly declared it to him, warning him about the possibility of his own abdication before very long.

In 1823 Alexander formally arranged the matter, not so much in the event of death as in case he should abdicate, which he had been seriously thinking of doing at that time. Even in 1822 Alexander received from Constantine a written abdication, and had a manifesto prepared, in which Constantine's abdication was declared correct, and Nicolas was "appointed" as his successor. This was in full accord with the circumstance that in the oath of allegiance to Alexander there were the words, "and to the heir who will be appointed." But for some reason that manifesto was not published; instead Alexander ordered Prince Golitzin to make three copies of it, then the original was given to Metropolitan Filaret to be placed and kept in strictest secrecy on the altar of the Cathedral of Assumption at Moscow; the three copies were distributed among the State Council, the Senate, and the Synod, in sealed envelopes, on one of which, given to the State Council, was an inscription in Alexander's own hand: "To keep until recalled, and in case of my death be opened before taking any other measure, in extra session." Similar inscriptions were made on the other two envelopes. The manifesto was known only to the Dowager Empress Marie, to Constantine, who did not see it but knew about its existence, to Golitzin, and Filaret. The only plausible explanation for such conduct may be the fact that Alexander made the arrangement mainly with his abdication in view, and since that act would have been voluntary he hoped that the whole matter would remain in his hands.

When on November 27, 1825, the news of Alexander's death reached Petrograd, Nicolas did not deem it proper to make use of an unpublished document, and knowing from Miloradovich that the Guards in the capital were by no means disposed towards him, he decided not to ascend the throne until Constantine had formally and solemnly abdicated in his favour. For this reason he took an oath of allegiance to Constantine as the legal Sovereign, and not heeding Golitzin who advised him to

open the sealed envelope containing the copy of the manifesto, which had been kept in the State Council, ordered all the troops of the Petrograd district swear allegiance to the Emperor Constantine. Then he sent a special courier to Constantine with a report about the administered oath and with an expression of his loyal feelings.

Constantine replied through his brother Mikhail who had been visiting him at Warsaw, that he had abdicated long ago; but he wrote this in a personal letter, without giving the act any official character. Nicolas considered such a letter insufficient, the more so since the Governor-General of Petrograd, Count Miloradovich, advised him to act with the utmost caution, in view of the indisposition of the Guards towards him.

To avoid misunderstandings, Nicolas despatched another courier, requesting Constantine to come to Petrograd and personally confirm his abdication. But Constantine again answered in a private letter that he had abdicated during Alexander's lifetime, that he could not come personally, and that if his arrival were insisted upon, he would take himself still farther away. Then Nicolas decided to bring these negotiations which had lasted two weeks to an end, and to declare his own accession. The manifesto, written by Speransky and Karamzin, was ready on December 12, but it was not published until December 14, which day was appointed for the general oath-taking to the new Emperor.

By the end of that unusual interregnum Nicolas had received alarming information from various sources about the state of mind in Petrograd and throughout Russia; but Miloradovich, though recommending caution, denied the possibility of a serious mutiny.

In the meantime the members of the Secret Society, who were in Petrograd, decided to make use of the unique confusion for their own purposes; it appeared to them that there could not be a

more favourable moment for raising a revolt and demanding a constitution.

On December 14, when a manifesto was issued regarding the abdication of Constantine and the accession of Nicolas, the members of the Northern Society, chiefly officers of the Guard and of the Navy, who gathered daily at Ryleiev's, made an attempt to persuade the soldiers that Constantine had not abdicated, that Nicolas acted against the law, and that they had to keep to their first oath to Constantine, and demand a constitution. The conspirators succeeded, however, in persuading only one regiment of the Guards — the Moscow regiment; its example was followed by several companies of the Guard-Marines, and by single officers and soldiers from various parts. The rebels gathered on the Senate Square, declared that they considered Constantine the lawful Emperor, refused to swear allegiance to Nicolas, and demanded a constitution.

Nicolas regarded the matter as serious; still he wanted to undertake measures for ending it if possible without bloodshed. With this view he at first sent Miloradovich who enjoyed a great prestige in the army as a war-general, and was especially loved by the soldiers, to talk to the mutineers. But when Miloradovich approached the rebels and began to speak to them, Kakhovsky, one of the conspirators, fired at him, and Miloradovich fell from his horse, deadly wounded. As the rebels were joined in the meantime by several artillery-batteries, Grand Duke Mikhail, the Chief of Artillery, offered to come out to them for negotiations, but he was also fired at by Wilhelm Küchelberg, and had to withdraw. Nicolas ordered an attack by the Cavalry Guards, under the command of Alexey Orlov, brother of the former member of the Union of Welfare. Orlov moved his men, but their horses were not shod properly, and could not speed over the rimed ground. The Generals then pointed out to Nicolas that it was necessary to bring a prompt

end to the matter, since the civil population was beginning to join the rebels. Nicolas ordered a charge; after a few volleys of grape-shot the crowd was turned to flight; but the firing at the people continued and they fled over the Isaac Bridge to the Basil Island. A considerable number of dead and wounded were left.

As a matter of fact that was the end of the Petrograd uprising. The other troops took the oath promptly, and the incident was closed. Nicolas ordered all corpses and traces of the event to be removed by the next day, and the obedient Chief of Police, Shulgin, ordered the corpses thrown into the ice-holes on the Neva; rumours circulated that in the haste with which the work was done, wounded were thrown into the river along with the dead. It was discovered later that a number of corpses had frozen to the ice, on the Basil Island side; an order was issued not to use the water on that side during the winter, and not to cut ice there, since parts of human bodies were found in it. Such was the dark event with which the new reign opened.

Searches and arrests throughout Petrograd followed. Among the several hundred arrested there were many not connected with the affair, but the main leaders were apprehended.

Yet on December 10 Nicolas received the first warning from the young lieutenant Rostovtzev about the threatening disturbances among the Guards, and about the same time he received from Dibich (the Chief of His Majesty's Staff in Taganrog) a copy of the reports about the conspiracy of the Southern Society; an attempt was also made to bring about an uprising in January, 1826, by Sergey Muraviov, at Bielaia-Tzerkov. Nicolas ordered an investigation of all secret societies at once, and this work occupied the first months of his reign.

But before we deal with the first actions of Nicolas, it is necessary to give some information about his personality. He was the third son of Paul, and was in his fifth year at his

father's death. The Dowager Empress took over his education, and Alexander from false delicacy did not interfere, though it would seem that the education of a possible heir to the throne was not a private but a state-affair. Most of Nicolas' biographers assert that he was brought up not as a future heir, but as an ordinary Grand Duke being prepared for military service. This view is not correct, as the members of the Imperial family could not have been ignorant of the probable accession of Nicolas, and moreover, Empress Marie knew that Constantine did not want to reign, and that neither he nor Alexander had children. Nicolas was brought up as an heir to the throne, but his education was quite different in every respect from that of Alexander.

Although Empress Marie had endeavoured to keep Nicolas from becoming attached to military service, he revealed quite early militaristic inclinations. Instead of La Harpe his mother entrusted his education to an old German routinist, General Lamsdorff, whom the Empress called in intimate conversations and in her letters, "*papà Lamsdorf.*" Nicolas was a rude, obstinate, arrogant boy; Lamsdorff tried to eradicate those defects by corporal punishments which he employed in liberal doses. His games with his younger brother usually took on a military character, and ended in most cases in a fight, owing to Nicolas' pugnaciousness and wilfulness. The court atmosphere was also such as deprived the education of family-intimacy. His teachers were of a casual and poor selection. For instance, his governor, a French émigré, Du-Pouge, taught him French and history, without being adequately prepared for either subject. All his instruction was reduced to inspiring the boy with hatred for revolutionary and liberal views. Nicolas was a poor pupil; all his teachers complained that he showed no progress, except in drawing. Later, however, he manifested quite brilliant abilities in military science.

When he passed the age of childhood, he was placed in care

of respectable and learned instructors. Academic Storch lectured to him on political economy; Professor Balugiansky, Speransky's instructor in financial science, taught him history and the theory of finance. But Nicolas himself confessed later that during those lectures he yawned, and managed to remember nothing of them. Military science was taught him by General-of-engineering, Opperman, and by various officers recommended by Opperman.

Empress Marie had intended to send Nicolas and Mikhail to the university of Leipzig, but Alexander interfered unexpectedly with his *veto,* and suggested instead that they be sent to the projected Lyceum in Tzarskoie Selo, but when that Lyceum was opened in 1811, the Grand Dukes were not sent there, and their education came thus to an end.

In 1812 Nicolas, then sixteen years old, begged Alexander to allow him to take part in active service, but the Emperor refused, and hinted that in the future he might play a more important rôle which did not permit him to risk his life, and obliged him to put more effort in preparing himself for his high and difficult mission.

In 1814 Alexander allowed his brothers to take part in the war, but they arrived late, when the Allied armies had already entered Paris. Nicolas was also late in 1815 when Alexander gave him permission to go to the front against Napoleon. Thus Nicolas did not see a real battle during the Napoleonic wars, and was present only at the brilliant reviews and manœuvres that followed the campaigns of 1814 and 1815.

In order to complete the characterisation of Nicolas' education, we must mention that in 1816 he undertook a journey through Russia, with the view of getting acquainted with his country, and after this he was allowed to travel in Western Europe. But those trips were performed with dizzying speed, so to speak, and the young Grand Duke was able to see Russia

only superficially — its external side. In the same way he travelled through Europe. Only in England he stayed somewhat longer, visited the Parliament, clubs, meetings — which filled him with disgust — and even called at New Lanark on Robert Owen, whose attempts to improve of labour-conditions made a very favourable impression upon him.

It is curious that Empress Marie feared lest the young Grand Duke become infatuated with the constitutional forms of England, and she requested the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Nesselrode, to compose a proper memorandum for Nicolas, with the purpose of restraining him from such infatuations. But the impressions which Nicolas had carried out from his English voyage proved that the memorandum was absolutely superfluous: his previous education had evidently insured him against any liberal temptations.

His European travels ended with his wooing the daughter of the King of Prussia, Princess Charlotte, whom he married in 1817; she accepted the Orthodox creed and the name of Alexandra Feodorovna. In 1818, at the age of 21, Nicolas became a father of the future emperor Alexander II. The last years of Alexander I's reign were spent by Nicolas in family-happiness and in military service, though Alexander warned him and his consort in 1819 that he was feeling tired and might abdicate, and that Constantine would not reign. Then in 1820 Alexander called Nicolas out to the Congress of Leibach, arguing that his brother ought to be acquainted with the course of foreign affairs, and that the representatives of the European Powers should become accustomed to seeing in him the successor of Alexander and the follower of his policy.

In spite of those conversations no changes took place in Nicolas' life. In 1817 he was promoted to the rank of General, and almost to the end of his reign he remained commander of a Guard-brigade. The work was tedious and hardly instructive

for the future ruler of a great empire; at the same time it was combined with unpleasant duties, since the main task of the Grand Duke consisted in restoring in the army that external discipline which had been greatly weakened during the foreign campaigns where the officers were accustomed to obey military regulations only at the front, while outside of it they considered themselves free citizens, and even wore civil garments. With these habits they returned to Russia. Alexander, who particularly cared for the preservation of the military spirit in the army, desired to "pull up" the officers, especially those of the Guards. In this matter of "pulling up" Nicolas appeared to be a most ardent and energetic missionary. In his reports he complained about the difficulties in accomplishing his task, in view of the dissatisfaction and even protests on the part of the officers who belonged to the highest society and were "infected" with free thoughts. In his activity Nicolas often met with the disapproval of his superiors, and soon with his pedantry and strictness he aroused the general hatred of the Guards to such an extent that during the interregnum in 1825 Miloradovich felt obliged, as we have seen, to warn him about the prevailing mood among the Guards, and to recommend caution.

Alexander, strangely enough, did not try to prepare him for the management of state-affairs, and did not introduce him to the work of the State Council and other institutions, so that Nicolas ascended the throne unprepared either in theory or in practice, although there exists an opinion that after the numerous admonitions of Alexander, Nicolas began to interest himself theoretically with state-matters.

His home-entourage, on the other hand, showed that he was not always the unpleasant, severe pedant of the brigade. Among the people who stood close to his family circle was Vassily Zhukovsky, the famous poet, who was at first invited to teach Russian to the Grand Duchess Alexandra, and later became the

tutor of their eldest son. Nicolas' chief friend in service was General Paskevich, a strict, soulless, vain militarist, who later played an important rôle in reorganising the Russian army.

Having ascended the throne under conditions described above, Nicolas determined to investigate first of all the causes and threads of the "sedition" which in his conception nearly destroyed the State on December 14. He undoubtedly exaggerated the importance and number of the secret societies, and was always fond of speaking in lofty tones about those events and his rôle in them, presenting them in a heroic light, although the Petrograd mutiny was numerically a quite impotent affair. The numerous arrests throughout Russia brought a total of five hundred suspects, of whom only one hundred and twenty were finally tried. To Nicolas the conspiracy appeared enormous and monstrous, and he firmly believed that on December 14 he had saved Russia from inevitable perdition. Such was also the opinion of his flatterers and sincere admirers. At his coronation in the Cathedral of Assumption, the Metropolitan of Moscow, Filaret, who was known as a liberal churchman, called Nicolas the Tzar who had saved his country.

With this idea of securing his personal and the country's safety, Nicolas neglected all other affairs in the first half year of his reign for the investigation of the conspiracy. He took active part in examining the prisoners, and frequently displayed rudeness, impatience, and bad temper. In a letter to Constantine he naïvely wrote that by the establishment of a supreme court for the trial of the Decembrists he had shown almost constitutional tendencies; from the point of view of modern jurisprudence, his words are sheer mockery. The whole process was reduced to an inquisitorial examination by a special committee directed by Nicolas, which committee decided the verdict in advance. The Supreme Court was merely a solemn comedy. It consisted of senators, members of the State Council, three

members of the Synod, and thirteen personal appointees of Nicolas, but no trial, in the modern sense of the word, took place there: no examination, no arguments, not always even a brief questioning of the accused; they were brought singly before the Court, and some only heard their sentence read to them, as a verdict of some secret Inquisition. Nicolas manifested great cruelty and callousness toward the defendants, although he sincerely believed that he was displaying justice and civil virility. One must admit that however his personal views differed regarding individual defendants, he sentenced them all with equal mercilessness; Pestel, whom he considered "a hell born fiend," and a most pernicious creature, received the same punishment as Ryleiev, in whom Nicolas saw the purest and loftiest personality, and whose family he generously supported later. By the verdict five men were sentenced to be quartered — Nicolas mitigated this by hanging; thirty-one men were sentenced to ordinary execution, i.e., to be shot — Nicolas commuted this to hard labour for life, in some cases for fifteen or twenty years. In the same proportion he commuted all sentences; but most of the accused were exiled to Siberia (some of them after long years of imprisonment in fortresses), and only a very few were reduced to soldiers for life — the mildest penalty.

For the subsequent course of the Government another side of that trial had been of no small importance. In his desire to fathom the sedition, Nicolas made the investigation extremely exhaustive. He wished to find out all the causes of dissatisfaction, to discover all the hidden springs, and thanks to this there was revealed to him a complete picture of the disorders in Russian social and official life, the dimensions and significance of which he had not before suspected. He understood at length that these disorders were enormous, that the dissatisfaction of many had good foundations, and he early admitted the need for

radical reforms. "I have distinguished, and shall always distinguish," he said to the French Ambassador, "those who desire just reforms and expect them to emanate from the legal authority, from those who want to undertake them by themselves, employing God knows what means."

By Nicolas' order, one of the secretaries of the Investigating Committee, Borovkov, worked out a special memorandum of all the plans and notes received from the Decembrists during the inquiry, some of which were written by the imprisoned men upon their own initiative, some by request of Nicolas. The Tzar, then, quite consciously borrowed from the Decembrists everything that might serve as useful material for the State-activity.

Borovkov's memorandum had in the end definite conclusions only a few of which were inspired by the testimony of the Decembrists, while most of them were drawn directly from the general state of internal affairs as revealed to Nicolas. Borovkov made the following résumé of the essential needs for the state-management: "It is necessary to grant clear, positive laws; to establish justice through fastest court proceedings; to elevate the moral education of the clergy; to support the nobility which has deteriorated and become completely ruined by loans in credit-associations; to resurrect commerce and industry on immutable foundations; to direct education in accordance with the status of the pupils; to improve the conditions of the farmers; to abolish the humiliating sale of men; to rebuild the navy; to encourage private persons for sea-faring; in short, to rectify the innumerable disorders and abuses." Nicolas had selected for consideration those facts and conclusions that most astonished him.

At any rate he saw among the Decembrists not a majority of inexperienced youths infatuated with dreams, but a large number of persons who had been connected before with the local or

central administration. Such was N. I. Turgeniev, state-secretary of the State Council and director of one of the departments of the Ministry of Finance; Krasnokutsky — Super-Procurator of the Senate; Batenkov — one of the close assistants of Speransky, and one time of Arakcheiev; Baron Steingel — Chief of the chancery of the Moscow Governor-General. Needless to say, Nicolas saw the opportunity of making use of such extraordinary minds as Pestel and Nikita Muraviov.

After the end of the trial of the Decembrists and the execution of the five men who were considered the chief conspirators, Nicolas hinted as to his views and intentions in the Coronation Manifesto of July 13, 1826: "Not by impertinent, destructive dreams, but from above, are gradually perfected the statutes of the land, are corrected the faults, are rectified the abuses. In this order of gradual improvement, every modest desire for the better, every thought for the strengthening of the power of the law, for the spread of true enlightenment and of industry, in reaching us by a legal way, open for all — will always be received by us with grace: for we have not, cannot have any other desire but to see our country on the highest grade of happiness and glory, by Providence predestined."

The Manifesto, issued immediately after the punishment of the Decembrists, showed undoubtedly the Monarch's intention of introducing a series of reforms, the nature of which depended upon his views on the essence and aims of the Sovereign's power. These views were made clear to him at his very accession by the aid of Karamzin who appeared at the difficult moment as the true guide and intimate counsellor of the young, inexperienced ruler. If from the Decembrists Nicolas had received the first surprising information about the disorder and abuses in the administration, he owed to Karamzin a general programme for his reign, which pleased his taste so much that he

was willing to do everything for that, in his eyes unequalled, counsellor who stood already with one foot in the grave.[1]

Karamzin, as you know, had not occupied any official post under Alexander, which did not prevent him from coming out at times as a sharp critic of the Government's undertakings, as at the moment of the energetic reforms of Speransky, or later, when he openly opposed the Polish policy, the Military Colonies, the obscurantist activity of the Magnitzkys and the Runiches in the sphere of popular education and censorship. At the accession of Nicolas, Karamzin's days were drawing to an end; on the day of December 14 he caught a cold while on the Palace Square, and although he struggled on for two months, he finally became confined to his bed, and died half a year later, unable to make use of the frigate that was furnished by the Tzar to take the sick historian to Italy. From the first day of the interregnum which began on November 27, 1825, Karamzin appeared daily at the Palace to consult with the Monarch, whom he tried to imbue with his views on the rôle of the autocrat, and on the national problems of the moment. Karamzin's talks made a profound impression on Nicolas. Preserving deep respect and even admiration for the recently deceased Tzar, Karamzin at the same time mercilessly criticised his governmental policy, so mercilessly that the Empress Marie, who had been present at all those conversations and who was probably responsible for their taking place, exclaimed once during Karamzin's attacks on the measures of the former reign: "Have mercy, have mercy on the heart of a mother. . . ." To which Karamzin answered: "I am speaking not only to the mother of the deceased Monarch, but also to the mother of the Monarch who is going to reign."

[1] Not long before his death Karamzin was granted a pension of fifty thousand rubles a year, to be continued after his death for his family.

We know what Karamzin thought of the rôle of Russian autocracy from his memorandum "On Ancient and New Russia," presented to Alexander in 1811. Nicolas could not have known that memorandum, since its only copy was given by Alexander to Arakcheiev, among whose papers it was found after his death, in 1836. But Karamzin had developed the same views later (1815), in his introduction to the "History of the Russian Dominion," which was certainly known to Nicolas. Karamzin's views had not changed to his very death; he had borrowed them from Catherine who considered that autocracy was necessary for the country, that without autocracy Russia would perish.

At the same time he considered the rôle of the autocrat as a sacred mission, as a constant service for Russia. He was far from exempting the Monarch from obligations, and strictly condemned such actions of the Tzars as did not correspond with the interests of Russia, but were based on personal despotism, whims, or even on ideological dreams (Alexander). It appeared to Karamzin that the subject in an autocratic state should be not a mute slave, but a brave citizen who owes absolute obedience to the Monarch, but is at the same time obliged to declare freely and frankly his opinions and views concerning the affairs of the state. Karamzin's political views, with all their conservatism, were undoubtedly utopian, but were nevertheless not devoid of a certain exaltation and noble feeling; they endeavoured to lend autocracy some idealism and beauty, and allowed absolutism, towards which Nicolas had been inclined by nature, to base itself on a lofty ideology. The immediate, half-conscious aspirations of Nicolas had gained a principle and a system perfectly fitting the young Monarch's tastes and inclinations. On the other hand, Karamzin's practical conclusions were so elementary and simple that they appealed to the direct, militaristic mind of Nicolas.

Karamzin's views did not exclude the possibility, even the necessity of undertaking the rectification of the abuses and mismanagement in Russian life, that had become clear to Nicolas through his contact with the Decembrists. With all his conservatism, Karamzin was neither a reactionary nor an obscurantist. After December 14 he said to one of his friends (Serbinovich) that he was "an enemy of revolutions," but admitted the necessity of peaceful evolutions which in his opinion were "most convenient under a monarchical régime."

Nicolas' confidence in Karamzin's wisdom was so great that he had evidently intended to give him a permanent post; but the dying historian was unable to accept any appointment, and in place of himself he recommended to the Tzar younger exponents of his ideas from the former members of the literary society "Arzamas": Bludov and Dashkov, to whom soon was added a third prominent Arzamasian, Uvarov, who later definitely formulated that Nationalism, of which Karamzin was the father.[2]

[2] Pushkin, one of the former Arzamasians, was recalled from his village to the capitals, and did complete penance in 1826. He was recalled to Moscow during the Coronation, and was allowed to come in his own carriage, i.e., not as one under arrest. The Emperor received him personally, and was favourably impressed with Pushkin's frank and straightforward talk. Nicolas undoubtedly wished to utilise Pushkin's great mind for the good of the State. He requested him to prepare a memorandum about the means for the improvement of popular education. Pushkin undertook the work reluctantly, only after the repetition of the request through Benckendorff. The poet was unaccustomed to such work, yet he performed it, and promulgated the idea that education might be useful even for the establishment of "desirable" tendencies, but that for its development some freedom was necessary. Nicolas did not like it evidently, as is seen from Benckendorff's note to Pushkin: "One should prefer morality, diligence, loyalty, to inexperienced, immoral, and useless education. On such principles should well-intended education be based."

(Note. Pushkin, the greatest Russian poet, had to submit his works to Nicolas and Benckendorff for approval. Upon reading Pushkin's drama, "Boris Godunov," Nicolas inscribed on the MS.: "Mr. Push-

kin would achieve his aim if he wrote a historical novel, in the style of Sir Walter Scott." Happily Pushkin did not go too far in his compromising, and refused to prostitute his art. But minor artists were not strong enough to hold their own during that depersonalising régime, and the situation was well characterised in the naïvely-earnest admission of a popular contemporary writer, Kukolnick: "If the Government so orders — I shall be a midwife."— TR.)

CHAPTER XV

KARAMZIN'S views served as the basis of Nicolas' internal policy. He considered himself the first servant of the state, and devoting his person entirely to the state he felt justified in demanding the same of others, expecting them to follow his directions. From his militaristic point of view he could not conceive of a service not regulated by a supreme authority and directed by a strict discipline and an official hierarchy. This conviction formed the foundation for his absolutism which developed *crescendo* during his reign, becoming more and more sheer despotism.

In this respect we may divide his reign into three periods; the first, from 1826 to 1831, the second — from 1831 to 1848, and lastly, the third — from 1848 to 1855. This division one should make only for the demarcation of the consecutive changes in the course of Nicolas' governmental activity, but in regard to the history of the Russian people and society the whole reign presents one important stage during which the moving factors of the socio-political process had accumulated and grown acute, and had found expression partly in the epoch of the Great Reforms, during the next reign, partly in an incomplete form in our own days.

The first period may be characterised as *quasi*-reformatory, and, at least externally, not opposed to Progress. But the very personality of Nicolas, his personal tastes, character, and growing absolutism, proved an essential obstacle for any progressive action, however moderate. He had evidently struggled with himself, trying to subdue his character and meet the urgent needs that had been so palpably revealed to him, but he succeeded

rather poorly, and for this reason that period was full of astonishing contradictions and vacillations caused not by the lack of decisiveness on the part of the redoubtable ruler of Russia — his character was quite decisive — but by the inner contrast between his nature and tastes, and the measures he undertook. Those vacillations were noticeable in his internal as well as in his foreign policy.

Many of Nicolas' biographers present his situation at that time as very difficult, since he did not inherit from Alexander any adequate assistants, aside from Arakcheiev. This is not true. In the first place Arakcheiev resigned his post of Reporter for the Committee of Ministers as early as December 10, 1825; for some time he still managed the Military Colonies, but soon he went abroad, and definitely abandoned even his pet Colonies. In the second place, under the influence of Karamzin and perhaps of Zhukovsky who had become an intimate member of his family circle from the year 1817, Nicolas determined to have no connection with the reactionaries of the preceding reign. Beside setting aside Arakcheiev, Nicolas treated the obscurantists of the Ministry of Education severely; Magnitzky was removed from the post of Curator of the Kazan university, and later in view of his intrigues against the new Curator, he was arrested and transported to Reval. The Curator of the Petrograd university was also discharged and brought to trial for financial abuses. The influential Fotiy received a set-back, and was forbidden to leave his monastery. Of Alexander's reactionaries there remained only the Minister of Education, Shishkov, who in the absence of Magnitzky and Runich, was quite harmless. Of greater importance for the future was the retainment, and even promotion of one of Arakcheiev's worst assistants, General Kleinmichel, a rude, cruel, hypocritical person.

On the whole, in the main spheres of administration a greater rôle was played by the representatives of the more moderate Conservatives, of the Karamzin type. Of Alexander's chief

assistants who continued their activity under Nicolas we should mention Count (later Prince) Kochubey, and Mikhail (later Count) Speransky. But Kochubey had grown old and had changed many of his former liberal views; yet in 1814 in the memorandum he presented to Alexander he expressed views very akin to those of Karamzin, and definitely stated that the conservation of autocracy was indispensable for Russia. Speransky had also changed many of his views since the catastrophe of 1812. He was no longer an ideologue of political liberalism, but decisively entered the road of political opportunism, devoting all his gifts and diligence for secondary technical improvements of the existing order instead of advocating its radical reorganisation. At the accession of Nicolas Speransky was no more the opponent of Karamzin, but his modest co-worker, and the two worked out by the order of the Tzar the first manifesto. Somewhat later Nicolas' confidence in Speransky wavered for a moment in view of his information about the plans of the Northern Society for appointing in case of the success of the revolution a temporary government with Speransky, Mordvinov, and Yermolov at the head. Soon, however, Nicolas convinced himself that these persons knew nothing about their candidatures, and had no relations with the revolutionary organisations.[1] Speransky regained Nicolas' complete trust in him after a long, frank conversation; the Tzar wrote about it to Dibich, and mentioned in his letter that Speransky had " done penance " for

[1] For Yermolov, however, Nicolas always preserved a hostile feeling. This was caused by a letter of Prince S. G. Volkonsky to Pestel, found during the searches. Volkonsky expressed his view on the state of mind among the Caucasian Corps under the command of Yermolov, which he had visited; he asserted that the revolutionary mood was so general in that Corps that one might hope for its joining the uprising in a body. Nicolas took the information seriously, and even feared that the Caucasian Corps would not take the oath. Although this did not happen, and after a careful investigation the words of Volkonsky had proved unfounded, the Tzar retained an unfriendly attitude toward Yermolov.

his former views. It is not known for what he repented, but in any case Nicolas' momentary mistrust had disappeared, and as early as January, 1826, Speransky was appointed head of the Commission of Laws which was soon reorganised into the Second Department of His Majesty's Own Chancery.

Nicolas did not allow Admiral Mordvinov to partake in his activities. Although he understood that there was no basis for suspecting Mordvinov in having had any relations with the Secret Society, he could not agree with the Admiral's views and policy. During Nicolas' reign Mordvinov with his always interesting and original opinions seldom appeared in the State Council.

Another person inherited by Nicolas from the preceding reign was Yegor Kankrin, a man of great originality and statesmanship, who then occupied the post of Minister of Finance. He was a man of a firm will and definite principles; his financial system consisted mainly in handling economically the people's money, and he always opposed most bitterly such of Nicolas' plans as required considerable expenditures. Later Nicolas jocosely remarked to his last Minister of Finance, the incapable and submissive Brock, that it was very agreeable to have such an obedient Minister, "Whereas Kankrin," recalled the Tzar, "would come to me in his slippers (he suffered from rheumatism), warm his back at the fireplace, and interrupt me every minute: 'Impossible, your Majesty, absolutely impossible.' . . ."

To Nicolas' credit we should mention that he kept Kankrin at his post for seventeen years, until he considered himself sufficiently trained by his Minister to manage the finances personally.

From letters of contemporaries we learn that from the very beginning Nicolas had shown great diligence and readiness to devote himself unreservedly to the service of the state, but at the same time he demonstrated an utter incapacity for selecting assistants, a fault that played great importance as an obstacle for

the promulgation of those moderate changes that appeared necessary in his own eyes.

Beside the persons recommended to him by Karamzin, Nicolas employed for the management of internal affairs those who had distinguished themselves in the organisation of the Process of the Decembrists. Foremost among them was General Benckendorff who had tried in vain since 1821 to call Alexander's attention to the spread and growth of secret societies in Russia. Along with him were promoted Generals Chernyshev and Levashov, investigators in the case of the Decembrists.

In the military sphere the young Tzar respected the authority of Generals Dibich and Paskevich. The first had been the Chief of Staff, and at the moment of Alexander's death all the threads of the Conspiracy were concentrated in his hands. His energetic activity in investigating the affair inspired Nicolas with confidence for him. Paskevich had been an old friend and direct superior of Nicolas since 1814. Both were considered by Nicolas as highly gifted generals, although their military talents were later questioned by military writers.

For the working out of a general plan for the intended reforms, a special Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Kochubey, on December 6, 1826. Speransky, Prince A. N. Golitzin, and Generals Count P. A. Tolstoy, Dibich, I. V. Vassilchikov, entered the Committee; the young state-secretaries, Bludov and Dashkov, were appointed as secretaries. In a short memorandum given to Kochubey at the beginning of the Committee's work, Nicolas pointed out that this should consist first of all in the examination of the papers found in the chancery of the late Emperor, secondly in the revision of the statutes of the existing state, and thirdly in expressing their opinions as to what had been planned during the preceding reign, what had been accomplished and what remained to be finished, and finally what was good in the existing order and what was not to be retained, and in that case by what it should be supplanted.

Such were the indefinite features of the proposed work of the Committee which carried on its regular activity from December 6, 1826, to April, 1830; in the two years following there were a few sporadic sessions, and although the Committee was not officially closed, its work was discontinued in 1832.

The mission of the Committee was so broadly outlined that its work could apparently acquire the same character as the famous Unofficial Committee at the beginning of Alexander's reign. As a matter of fact there was nothing in common between the two institutions: Alexander's Committee consisted of idealistic representatives of the advanced tendencies of the age, whereas Nicolas' secret Committee contained men of the older generation, sated and disappointed with life (as Speransky, Kochubey, Golitzin), or young career-hunters and doctrinaires (as Bludov and Dashkov), who did not even propose any novel measures, and whose whole activity was reduced to the examination of the statutes of the central and provincial institutions, and of the then existing "class-laws" in which they suggested some changes in the status of the nobility and the middle class, in the elections among the nobles, and in the management of the Fiscal peasants. In passing they touched upon the peasant-question, but so hesitatingly and indolently that the Emperor remained utterly displeased with their work in that field.

In the peasant-question, the importance of which Nicolas admitted after the first peasant-disturbances that took place during his reign, he proved more progressive and firm than in all his other undertakings. The question was constantly under discussion till the year 1848; ten consecutive Committees were instituted for the exhaustive investigation of the problem, and we may say that during his reign was done more for the peasant-question than during that of the liberal Alexander I. We shall discuss this in the exposition of the second period of Nicolas' reign, when the question received most attention from the Government.

From the very beginning Nicolas regarded the Military Colonies sceptically, but he was unable to liquidate at once so great an undertaking, and unwilling to undermine the authority of his late brother, so that the Colonies not only continued to exist to the end of his reign, but were even enlarged on various occasions. Their final liquidation took place under Alexander II.

His particular ideas about the rôle and duties of an autocrat, on one hand, and his mistrust for the public and for the officials, on the other hand, were reflected in Nicolas' treatment of measures that appeared to him especially important and difficult, and which he desired to exclude from the ordinary matters entrusted to his regular Ministers. For this purpose Nicolas from the very beginning of his reign established separate departments of his own Chancery, at the head of which he placed persons in whom he had special confidence; he ranked them as Ministers, and they were officially known as Chief Directors. The first new Department was opened in January, 1826, and was named the Second Department of His Majesty's Own Chancery, under the directorship of Speransky who was transferred from the Commission of Laws which was abolished; the secretary of the Department was State-Secretary Balugiansky. The codificatory work concentrated in that Department was quite successful, as we shall see, and was accomplished in 1832 and 1833.

In the same way Nicolas desired to organise the management of the political and secret police. After the insurrection of December 14 he considered this activity as one of the most important in the state. He decided to leave the general overt police-work in the hands of the Ministry of Interior, but for the observation of the state of mind, opinions and tendencies of the population he created a special Corps of Gendarmes, with Adjutant General Benckendorff as its Chief (June 25, 1826); a few days later (July 3) the special Chancery of the Minister of Interior, in which had been concentrated the affairs of the

Secret police, was abolished, and its former jurisdiction transfered to the newly organised Third Department of His Majesty's Own Chancery, the Chief of which was the same General Benckendorff.

The following matters were included in the sphere of activity of the Third Department which subsequently acquired such a dark reputation:

(1) All orders and information about matters of Higher Police (political matters); (2) intelligence as to the number of existing sects and dissents in the state; (3) information about discoveries of assignation-forgers, coin-forfeiters, etc., the finding and further care of whom remained in the hands of the Ministers of Finance and of the Interior; (4) information and orders about persons under police-surveillance; (5) exile and transportation of suspicious and harmful persons; (6) supervision of all "political" prisons; (7) all regulations regarding foreigners; (8) information about all events and occurrences, without exception; statistical information of concern to the police.[2]

[2] Here are some of Benckendorff's views as to the purpose of that institution, with which Nicolas undoubtedly fully agreed:

. . . "The Chief of Gendarmes will be able to make use of opinions of honest persons who may desire to warn the Government about some conspiracy, or impart some interesting news. Criminals, intriguers, and simple persons, having repented of their sins and being desirous of redeeming their guilt by giving information, will at least know where to turn.

"Toward the Chief will flow information from all Gendarmes-Officers scattered throughout Russia and in the army: this would enable us to fill those places with honest and capable men who often despise the rôle of secret spies, but when wearing the uniform of governmental officials will zealously perform their function.

"Rank, decorations, crosses, serve as higher rewards than money for an officer, but for secret agents they are of no importance, and thus frequently they work as spies for and against the Government.

"The Chief will have to travel every year, to visit the big fairs, where he could contract connections and attract persons avariciously inclined.

From the very beginning Nicolas had given particular attention to the question of popular education. With the view of eradicating the spirit of "sedition," he intended to direct the education of the people in such a way that it should form desirable citizens, loyal and meek servants of the state among all classes, and should thus guarantee a firmer stability to the order of things than the one that had existed theretofore. The leading principle was to give each class such education as would not arouse any hopes and aspirations for rising from one class into a higher class. It was proposed first of all to limit the education of peasant children, lest they develop ideas about changing their conditions. Nicolas had intended to issue a law concerning this even before the formation of the Committee of December 6, but Kochubey opposed the idea, considering that such a law would lower the Government in the opinion of the foreign Powers; instead he recommended that a rescript on the name of the Minister of Education be published in which he should be directed to accept peasant children only into primary schools. Nicolas consented and issued such a rescript on the name of Minister Shishkov, in May, 1827. The Ministry of Education proceeded to act in this way in the future. In 1828 under the chairmanship of Shishkov a committee was formed for the revision of the statutes and programmes of all primary and secondary schools; among the members of that committee were two subsequent Ministers of Education: Prince Lieven and S. S. Uvarov.

In December, 1828, a new Statute for District-schools and Gymnasia was carried through. The Statute separated the District-schools from the Gymnasia; before that time, the former served as preparatory schools for the latter, but by the new

"His shrewdness should warn him against trusting even the director of his office; not even he must know all his assistants and agents. . . ."

General (later Count) Benckendorff enjoyed to his very death the complete confidence and favour of Nicolas.

Statute the Municipal and District-schools were made separate primary schools with no connection with the Gymnasia which were open thenceforward only to children of nobles and officials. Strict measures were undertaken for the prohibition of education by means of private teachers, since it had been observed that a large number of the Decembrists had been educated by private French teachers.

In closing our exposition of the main events and circumstances of the first period of Nicolas' reign, we must mention his attitude towards Poland. The Tzar had to act as a constitutional monarch and comply with the Constitution of 1815; it went much against his grain, yet he forced himself to overcome his personal aversion, and in 1829 came to Warsaw where he took the oath in a Catholic church, and assembled the Diet — as soon as the cessation of hostilities with Turkey permitted him to do so. On the whole we may say that up to the insurrection of 1830 Nicolas, in spite of his personal tastes, conducted himself more correctly as a constitutional monarch than did Alexander, the creator of the Constitution of 1815.

In his international relations Nicolas demonstrated in the first years of his reign the same vacillation that characterised his internal policy. Obeying the voice of the people he found it necessary to defend the Greeks from the atrocities of the Turks, while in his letters to Constantine he called the Greeks base and impertinent rioters who deserved no sympathy and should have been forced to submit to the Sultan. But the forced championship of the Greeks brought him to war with Turkey. The Russian fleet together with the British and French fleets destroyed the Turkish fleet at Navarino, and the Sultan considered Russia chiefly to blame. In the war that broke out in 1828 Nicolas strove to make Turkey accept his demands, but he tried not to bring upon her any crushing defeats, since he did not wish the destruction of the Turkish monarchy. Owing to this hesitation the first year of the war ended quite unfavourably,

and only in 1829 when Nicolas took the advice of General Vassilchikov and did not go to the theatre of war, but granted freedom of action to the new commander-in-chief, Dibich, was the campaign ended successfully. But the world was astonished by the moderateness of the conditions of peace presented to Turkey.

This first period of Nicolas' reign came to an end after the first days of the July revolution in France. The banishment of his friend, Charles X, from France, and the subsequent fall of the Netherlands monarchy (where the queen was Nicolas's sister, Anna Paulovna), inspired Nicolas to stand rigorously for legitimistic principles in European affairs. As early as 1830 he was about to send his army to the Rhine in defence of those principles; but instead he was forced to use it for the suppression of the Polish uprising. That insurrection brought an end to any toleration of liberal ideas on the part of the Tzar, and was the cause of the abolition of the Constitution of 1815.

CHAPTER XVI

AFTER the July revolution in France and the Polish insurrection of 1830–1831, the first, *quasi*-reformatory period, of Nicolas' reign came to an end. Having abandoned all attempts to reorganise the state-institutions, the Tzar, one may say, found himself. He took a new, strictly conservative course, from which he never deviated. Thenceforth he considered it his main task to fight against revolutionary ideas in Western Europe as well as at home, although Russia seemed to have given no reasons for such activity, since everything had been quiet and obedient after the cruel punishment of the members of the secret societies.

The new firm course in international affairs appeared definitely in 1833, after the meeting of the Tzar with the Austrian emperor, Franz, at Münchengrätz, where there were established those good relations between the two countries that so heavily impressed the entire course of European affairs to the very time of the Crimean Campaign. Before that meeting a favourable moment had come for Russia's relations in the East, when Turkey was on the verge of destruction as a result of the revolt of the Egyptian Pasha, Mehmed Ali, whose son, Ibrahim, had crushed the Turkish army. The fall of Turkey was averted at that moment through the intervention of Russia. Nicolas offered Turkey military help and sent her a corps under General Muraviov. The Russian ships were permitted to enter the Bosphorus, and the Unkiar-Skelessi Treaty was concluded, which gave Russia a protectorate over Turkey — one of the most distinguished achievements of Russian diplomacy. The Tzar endeavoured to keep decaying Turkey alive, desiring to have such

a weak neighbour under his protectorate. Austria, however, looked upon that protectorate with suspicion, but she could not interfere in the East since after the July revolution considerable fermentation was going on among the various nationalities of the Hapsburg monarchy.

In the meantime Nicolas, fearing a general revolutionary movement in Europe under the influence of liberal England and revolutionary France, sought a close alliance with Austria and Prussia in order to counteract the free aspirations of the West. Metternich was the gladder to meet the proposal of Nicolas, since Austria by herself was quite impotent. The position of Russia in Europe at that time was well characterised later by Ivan Aksakov who named the period the epoch of Russia's "police-chiefery" in Europe. Indeed, Nicolas with his army of a million strong firmly occupied a position threatening any popular movement against the *status quo* established at the Vienna Congress; it was with his support that Austria and Prussia were able to carry on their reactionary policy until 1848.

In his internal policy Nicolas gave up all liberal reforms after the revolution of 1830, and his slogan became the safe-guard of the original Russian order based on "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality"— the formula invented by Uvarov who was then Minister of Education, and which was in complete accord with Karamzin's programme. Nicolas endeavoured to preserve the Russian order from any political temptations, and blocked all connections with the revolutionary West.

Yet the repair of some institutions, of especially crying need, continued without, of course, any radical reorganisation. Thus the issue of a legislative code, a century old problem, was safely brought to an end during this period.

This matter, as I have mentioned, was handed over to Speransky in the year 1826, and he started upon the work with more practical aims than he did during his earlier activity, when he worked on the basis of theoretic principles of foreign legislations.

Now he carefully consulted the old Russian codes, beginning with the *Ulozhenie* of Tzar Alexis. In a few years he performed the colossal work of collecting and issuing all the laws that had been promulgated by the Government since 1649; under his direction that task was accomplished in 1832, and published in forty-seven large volumes of the *Complete Collection of Laws.*

On the basis of this Collection, after a careful comparison, expurgation, and scientific classification, the *Code of Laws* was issued in 1833 in fifteen volumes. There was nothing reformatory, in the proper sense of the word, in that work, but it was beyond doubt an event of extraordinary importance. The absence of such a Code had been one of the main sources of abuses by various court officials and archaic solicitors in the epoch when the folk-saying was formed: *Zakon chto dyshlo: kuda poverniosh tuda y vyshlo* (the law is like a wagon-tongue, wherever you turn it, there it goes).

Another, still more important question which had not been definitely solved during that whole reign, was the peasant-problem. It had uninterruptedly occupied the mind of the Government till the year 1848. Nicolas was first moved to attempt its solution by the peasant-uprisings which broke out in the first year of his reign, and had constantly recurred, not allowing the Government to nap or to close their eyes on the crying wounds in the institution of serfdom.

The fact of the matter is that by that time there were formed in the internal national life such material conditions which undermined serfdom and prepared the way for its downfall more forcibly than any idealistic demands. First of all such a circumstance was the increased density of the population, especially in some of the central black-soil provinces, which rendered the bondage-labour under the *barshchina* system very unprofitable for the landowners, since there was a surplus of hands for the primitive farming of those days, while the forced labour did not allow any real intensification of the productivity of the soil.

The growth of the bonded population increased particularly in the period between 1816 and 1835. By the fifth census of the entire bonded population, including Siberia and the Ostsee region, there were nine million eight hundred thousand male persons; by the seventh census — nine million seven hundred and eighty-seven thousand (owing to the human loss during the Napoleonic wars); and from 1816 to 1835 the bonded population increased to ten million eight hundred and seventy-two thousand, i.e., by more than a million souls, in spite of the fact that during that period four hundred and thirteen thousand Ostsee serfs were freed. The superabundance of serfs greatly embarrassed the landowners who could do nothing but transfer the peasants into the class of house-serfs whose number had been always greater than necessary.

The *barshchina*-estate presented not only an agricultural unit, but a sort of a domestic factory, for every landowner endeavoured to buy only such commodities as iron or salt, and to have all other necessaries produced on the estate by bondage-labour. For this reason the number of house-serfs reached in those days enormous dimensions: before the ninth census out of ten million bondmen there was over one million house-serfs, i.e., a landless population occupied either with house work or with work in the domestic factories. By the tenth census the number of house-serfs had reached one million four hundred and seventy thousand. The landowners treated them without any ceremonies: in poor years many of them drove their serfs out to beg. Some landowners tried to employ their surplus hands in the estate-factories which had developed at the end of the eighteenth century, but in this direction the landowners met with the insurmountable competition of the growing and developing merchant-factories. The technical improvements in the latter factories were inaccessible for the landowners, first because of absence of capital, and second because it was quite difficult to adapt forced labour to the improved means of production. The professional factory-owners

had come to the conclusion that forced labour was not profitable, and even owners of Possessional factories began to reject Possessional peasants, so that in 1847 a law was issued permitting those factory-owners to liberate their peasants. No wonder that the estate-factories were unable to cope with that competition, and that during the Thirties and Forties many of them had closed.

But outside of the increased density of the population, the landowners suffered from the enormous indebtedness that had hung over them since 1812. The voluntary and involuntary contributions and sacrifices during the wars amounted to hundreds of millions, and if we consider that the entire income of the estates did not exceed one hundred million rubles a year, we shall be able to form some idea of the enormous indebtedness of the landowners. By 1843 more than fifty-four per cent. of the estates were mortgaged to credit-institutions. The average indebtedness of the landowners was sixty-nine rubles per bonded peasant, while the average value of a serf was not above one hundred rubles, so that the greater part of the serfs did not in reality belong to the landowners. The mortgage-loans required high interest, and to this we should add that the majority of the land-owners had accumulated also "private" debts on which they paid much higher interest.

Acquaintance with the life of Western Europe during the Napoleonic wars had brought big changes in the status of the landowners: they were no longer satisfied with the standard of living that existed under patriarchal natural conditions, but had acquired new tastes, habits, and required a more luxurious and comfortable life which demanded a buying capacity. This circumstance necessitated new loans.

All these conditions combined caused increasing deficits in the landowners' budgets, and their deteriorating affairs were reflected mainly on the situation of their serfs, greatly aggravat-

ing the relations between the peasants and their masters. In the black-soil provinces, particularly in the densely populated ones, conditions became unbearable. During the Forties among many landowners, especially in the provinces of Tula, Riazan, Oriol, the idea had grown that such conditions could not endure, and that the liquidation of serfdom with the retention of the land by the gentry would be more profitable than the existing state. These ideas were expressed in various declarations presented to the Government in the Forties. Some landowners of Tula, followed later by some of Riazan and Smolensk, were willing to liberate their serfs, and even to allot them one desiatin per soul on condition that the peasants took over a large portion of the landowners' debts. A lengthy correspondence took place with the Government, a Committee was formed, deputations were sent to the Tzar, but after 1848 all talk about changing the order of things had to stop in view of the severe reaction that had come to reign.

Such were the circumstances that had been in, so to speak, an inner, organic way undermining the institution of serfdom, and made its liquidation inevitable even from the point of view of the nobles. On the other hand, the peasants had not remained quiet. There were five hundred and fifty-six peasant-disturbances during Nicolas' reign, uprisings of whole villages and *volosts,* not ordinary local misunderstandings. Of them forty-one disturbances took place during the first four years of his reign, before 1830; their highest number occurred in the period between 1830 and 1849 (three hundred and seventy-eight disturbances); the last seven years of his reign saw one hundred and thirty-seven disturbances. About half of those uprisings had to be quelled not by ordinary police measures, i.e., by the arrival of a police squad for a mere flogging of the rioters, but by military force, with frequent bloodshed. The peasant-question demanded the attention of the state, and it occupied a prominent place in the

discussions of the Committee of December 6, 1826; the work of the Committee, though it had some significance, did not bring any substantial results.

For example, in connection with the work of the Committee there was issued a law in 1827 prohibiting the landowners from depriving their peasants of soil by selling out lands without serfs. Earlier the question had been put about the sale of serfs without land, but now it was required that the estates were big enough to possess a minimum of four and a half desiatins per soul. In practice this law had no substantial value, for it was not carried through, but it received a legal sanction: in theory if a landowner sold more land than the law permitted, his estate could be confiscated by the state.

Another law connected with the work of the Committee of December 6, 1826, was the prohibition of transferring serfs to mines, which had been one of the heaviest forms of serf-exploitation. At the same time renting serfs to persons who did not have the right to own them was forbidden. These were all the measures of the Committee for the regulation of serfdom. After the cessation of its work the most important factor in regulating the conditions of the serfs was the publication of the Code of Laws. Its importance lay in the fact that all the various decrees and orders concerning the limitation of the landowners' power over their peasants had been normalised as general, obligatory laws.

In the ninth volume of the Code these laws were expounded in detail; on one hand they limited the authority of the landowners over their peasants, and on the other, they placed certain obligations upon the landowners. In this respect is important the prohibition — mentioned above — of selling too much land in congested estates. There was furthermore a series of regulations placing on the landowners the care for provisioning their serfs. This was an important measure, for during Nicolas' reign several failures of crops had taken place. But in practice

the landowners tried to evade the provisioning law, and let the peasants starve. There was a law in the Code, punishing the landowners for begging on the part of their peasants (one and a half ruble for every case of begging discovered). This law also existed only in theory. The crop failures occupied the attention not only of the landowners, but of the Government, as they led in places to sheer famine which at times took on devastating dimensions owing to the bad roads. In 1833 the increase of the population in some districts was half of the normal, owing to a recent famine. In the western provinces there were numerous disturbances in those years on account of lack of provisions. The Government gave out considerable subsidies, at times millions, to the landowners for provisioning the peasants, but in most cases those subsidies were made use of for the needs of the landowners rather than for the starving peasants. The attempt of the Government to control the distribution of those subsidies was frustrated, since the local authority was in the hands of officials elected by the nobles.

After the publication of the Code of Laws, the next important step of the Government in regard to the peasant-question was the formation of the Secret Committee of the year 1835. The question was posed there categorically — to examine the means for the liquidation of the serfdom relations. The sessions of the Committee were held in strict secrecy, and only recently did their minutes become accessible in the Archives. The Committee found it convenient to divide the course of solving the serfdom problem into three tentative stages, without indicating the time for the succession of the stages. The first stage, then in existence, presented the regulation of the serfdom-rights by the statutes introduced into the Code of Laws. During the second stage was to enter the system of " Inventories," or the regulating of the economic and legal conditions of the peasants without however abolishing serfdom; this situation would correspond to that of the Ostsee provinces in the years 1804–5, before the new

statutes of 1816–19. The third stage was presented by the Committee as the period of personal liberation of the serfs, without soil.

The work of the Committee brought no practical results. Among its members was Kiselev, the same Kiselev who as Chief of Staff in the Southern Army had been friendly with some Decembrists — with Pestel among them — for which reason he did not at first inspire Nicolas with confidence. Soon, however, at a personal meeting with the Tzar, Kiselev explained straightforwardly and loyally his political convictions, after which Nicolas no longer suspected him. In 1829 he was appointed head of the temporary management of the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, then occupied by the Russian troops (until the payment of the war-contribution by Turkey). The peasant-question came there to the front; the relations between the *boyars* and the peasants became extremely acute. Kiselev's method of dealing with the problem — a method similar to the Ostsee statute of 1804 — pleased Nicolas greatly, and after reading Kiselev's report on the management of the Principalities he decided to make use of him for the solution of the peasant-question in Russia. He appointed him member of the State Council in 1834, and told him that since he did not hope for the sympathy of his Ministers in the matter, he would personally take care of the peasant-question, and invited Kiselev to become, so to speak, his Chief of Staff on peasant-affairs.

Kiselev gladly undertook the work, for the question had interested him from his youth, and even as an Adjutant of Alexander he had presented to the Tzar a memorandum about the peasant-question. At first he occupied himself with the Fiscal peasants who were under the management of the Department of State Domains, subject to the Minister of Finance; the Committee of December 6, 1826, already approved of Speransky's idea that the Government should show an example to private owners.

The Minister of Finance was Kankrin whose attitude towards the peasants was not less favourable than that of Kiselev. Although Kankrin was not a Physiocrat and opposed the principle of *Laissez faire,* he could also have inserted in his coat-of-arms the words: *pauvre paysan — pauvre royaume; pauvre royaume — pauvre roi.* His main purpose had been to improve the condition of the population, by regulating the finances, lessening expenditures, avoiding loans and other national burdens. We shall have later to speak of his economical and cultural activity. In regard to the Fiscal peasants Kankrin intended to regulate the system of collecting their dues and save them from the abuses of the police-officers who acted as locusts in their relations with the people. As an experiment he proposed to separate the Fiscal peasants of the provinces of Petrograd and Pskov from the general administration, and to establish Districts (as in the case of the Tzar's peasants) under the management of special officers appointed by the Minister of Finance. Of course that reform was a purely bureaucratic palliative: the peasants were transferred from the jurisdiction of one class of officials to that of another, but Kankrin had undoubtedly desired to come in closer contact with the peasants and try to alleviate their conditions. In 1834 Kankrin proposed to expand the new order on ten more provinces. But Nicolas, dissatisfied with the slowness of the work, and ascribing it to the fact that Kankrin had too many other cares, handed the work over to Kiselev who was appointed Chief of the new, Fifth, Department of His Majesty's Own Chancery, for the management of peasant affairs. Kiselev first of all inspected the position of the Fiscal peasants in four provinces, and revealed a mass of abuses not only on the part of the local administration, but on the part of the Department of State Domains, whose Chief, Senator Dubensky, was put on trial. Then, after a few collisions with Kankrin, Kiselev declared that he felt uncomfortable in managing the affair in the name of the Tzar, while it remained in the jurisdiction of the

Minister of Finance, who was unable to devote much time to the peasant-question. As a result, a new, independent institution was founded, the Ministry of State Domains, which was to take care of all fiscal estates, forests, and mines.

The new Ministry was founded in 1837, with Kiselev as its head. He followed the way indicated by Kankrin: established local Chambers of State Domains, and District Boards. The Fiscal peasants received some autonomy in their Communes and *Volosts,* but they were under the care of District Chiefs who had an unlimited right to interfere with their agricultural and domestic affairs. True Kiselev endeavoured to select good men for District Chiefs, but in the long run it became apparent that the new system had placed the peasants under a worse bondage than before, for whereas the former dishonest officials, the Rural Commissaries, could but seldom visit the Fiscal estates, having many other duties to perform, the new officials had only one special function to perform — the "protection" of the peasants. That system brought no good results.

Although Kiselev was given the management only of Fiscal peasants he actually remained what Nicolas called him — Chief of his Staff for peasant-affairs, and took active part in the development of the whole question.

The Committee of 1835 achieved nothing, and by 1839 a new Committee was formed, with more modest aims, and as a result of its work a new Statute about "Obligatory peasants" appeared in 1842. The Statute allowed landowners to free their peasants from personal bondage and transfer them into the class of Obligatory peasants; by mutual agreement between the landowners and their former bondmen the latter were given some land, not in property but in use, for which they "obliged" themselves either to bear a certain *barshhina* or to pay a definite money-*obrok,* the amount of those obligations to remain unchanged. Some degree of self-government was given with it to the village, of the kind that had already existed in some *obrok-*

estates. The peasants thus came into a situation similar to that of the Ostsee peasants in 1804–5. The Statute in itself was not bad, but the fact that the initiative was granted only to the landowner reduced the act to next to nothing.

When this reform was discussed in the State Council, Prince D. V. Golitzin, Governor-General of Moscow, told Nicolas that in his opinion the measure might have some sense only in case the transfer of the serfs into Obligatory peasants became obligatory upon the landowners. Nicolas replied that although he was an autocratic ruler, he could not decide to violate the privileges of the landowners in such a way. This answer shows how far peasant-reform could have been carried under Nicolas. But he acted more determinedly in the western provinces where the gentry was Polish, and the peasants Russian, and where, after the insurrection of 1831 he considered himself justified in not being over scrupulous about the property of the Polish nobles. There his policy was in complete accord with the principle: "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality."

And so in the Forties quite severe "Inventory Regulations" were issued for the landowners of the West; they were based on the ideas of Kiselev, and were ardently upheld by the Governor-General of Kiev, Bibikov, who had shown himself as a rabid Russificator. The Regulations defined the amount of land that the landowners had to allot to the peasants, and the amount of the peasants' dues. In 1847 those Regulations were introduced in the provinces of Kiev, Volhynia, and Podolia, and later in Lithuania and White Russia. In Lithuania similar rules had existed for a long time, but the landowners had had more freedom; the Lithuanian nobles vigorously protested against the new, Bibikovian, Regulations, and the question was alive until the Fifties. In 1849 Bibikov, then Minister of the Interior, wanted to introduce the Regulations by force, but the Lithuanian nobles found a defender in the person of the Heir (subsequently Alexander II), who had become reactionary after the revolu-

tions of 1848, and considered that it was necessary to uphold the "sacred" rights of the gentry. Thus the Inventory Regulations were not introduced in Lithuania and White Russia during Nicolas' reign.

In 1846 an analogous structure was established in the Kingdom of Poland. The Polish peasants had been personally freed by a decree of Napoleon in 1807, but they had not received any land. The landowners did not drive the peasants away, and allowed them to work on their former lands for *barshchina* or *obrok*. They occupied large tracts of land, but legally the landowners could expel them at any moment, and making use of this advantage they exploited the peasants not less than if they were bondmen. In the same year, 1846, a terrible slaughter of landowners took place in adjacent Galicia, which terrified the gentry of the Kingdom of Poland and the Viceroy, Prince Paskevich. Improvement of the conditions of the peasants was admitted to be urgently needed. On May 26, 1846, a ukase was issued, introducing *Tables,* perfectly analogous to the Inventory Regulations in the western provinces. The agrarian relations that had existed before were confirmed, and the landowners were forbidden to diminish the peasants' allotments or to increase their obligations.

Finally in 1847 upon the proposal of Baron M. A. Korf a ukase was published permitting the peasants in Russia (as it had been earlier permitted in Gruzia) to buy themselves out with land by whole villages in cases when landowners' estates were sold by auction for debts. The peasants thus received a loophole through which to creep out of bondage, the more so since, owing to the terrible indebtedness of the landowners their estates were frequently sold by auction. Among the nobility arose bitter protests against that ukase; Governors reported that it disturbed the public. After 1848 it was actually annulled through the addition of numerous amendments. From that year

on Nicolas acquired an uncompromising reactionary attitude towards any novelties, and all attempts to regulate serfdom ceased.

Such were the peasant-measures undertaken during the second period of Nicolas' reign.

CHAPTER XVII

IN outlining the second period of Nicolas' reign we must consider alongside with the course of the peasant-question the development of industry and commerce during the Thirties and Forties of the nineteenth century, and also in this connection, the policy of the Ministry of Finance.

As I have already mentioned, the cotton industry had developed most rapidly in the first half of the nineteenth century and this has been ascribed by many to the influence of the tariff of 1822, which had launched the Russian customs policy on the road of constant protectionism. The profoundest investigator of that question, Professor Tugan-Baranovsky, has shown that the situation was due not so much to the protectionist tariff as to the changes in the cotton industry, which had taken place in England during the very time of its development in Russia.

Up to the Forties the Russian cotton-spinning industry had existed mainly on English yarn; true, during the Continental System, when all connections with England had ceased the Russian factory-owners made an attempt to utilise Central-Asiatic cotton for the production of yarn, but still until the Forties the larger part of yarn came ready-made from England, because the arrangement of cotton-mills was not an easy matter. The custom dues on cotton were not very high, while the prices of yarn and tissue had been falling continually in England, in connection with the recurring crises. It has been statistically proven that every crisis in England was followed by technical improvements which immediately caused a fall in the value of the product. For this reason the cost of cotton-stuffs had been decreasing also in Russia, thus increasing the spread of cotton-mills. The vacilla-

tions in the English cotton industry had aroused vacillations in Russia, in view of the cheapening of the imported products and fabrics. The competition induced Russian manufacturers also to introduce improvements which consisted mainly in buying new costly machines, a measure possible only to large capitalists. Owing to these peculiarities in the development of Russian cotton industry, during the Forties many small and mediocre cotton-mills had perished, and production had become concentrated in the hands of the big manufacturers.

As an important consequence of the development of the cotton industry came the fall of the hemp and canvas industry, particularly in the Forties. The development of those factories which had mainly supplied the English fleet, had had the following course: in 1762 their number was one hundred and thirty-five, in 1804 — two hundred and seventy-five, and by the time of the accession of Alexander II the number fell to one hundred. The cheapening of the production of cotton had made competition impossible for hemp and harl producing regions, as in the province of Kaluga, where the number of such factories had fallen from seventeen to four.

As to cloth factories, their number began to increase considerably after the removal of restrictions from the Possessional factories, but toward the Forties that industry began to fall, owing to the competition of the Polish manufacturers. The Polish cloth industry was better situated because sheep-raising was more highly developed there, and because they had no custom-tariff for Silesian wool, so that having an abundance of cheap raw material they were able to produce cloth cheaper than the Russian manufacturers. Later Prussian manufacturers succeeded in obtaining privileges for the import of their cloth, and when those privileges were withdrawn, many Prussians migrated with their factories to the Kingdom of Poland, in order to sell their products to Russia and through Russia to China; thus the cloth industry in Poland was still further enhanced. This com-

petition of Poland played a big rôle in the tariff measures of the Government.

In the cotton industry there was marked a concentration of production, owing to the fact that only big manufacturers were able to compete with foreign imports. But during the Forties there began to appear a reverse situation not only in cotton industry, but in all manufacturing industry. Statistics show that although the number of factories continued to grow, the increase in workingmen began to slacken, and if we should estimate the number of workingmen in each factory it will appear that production was becoming smaller. This was caused by the development not of the middle-sized industry, but of small *kustarny* (home work) production. I have already said that in the beginning of the nineteenth century in view of the greater productivity of hired labour in comparison with bonded labour, and because of other conditions unfavourable for the landowners, estate-factories began to disappear; but the merchants'-factories unexpectedly created a new competitor for themselves in the rural population. With the spread of cotton-spinning industry the manufacturers were not satisfied with the number of looms that they could put up in their factories, but in addition they gave out work for the peasants to do at home. But when the peasants found that they could easily buy (for cash or in credit) looms and yarn, they started an independent spinning industry, thus competing with the factories, and quite successfully, owing to the inexpensiveness of home production. This explains the fact that the number of factories grew, while the number of their workingmen diminished.

Let us observe that the *kustarny* industry, which originated in times immemorial, developed very rapidly in the nineteenth century in those productions that do not require particular outputs, as in the textile industries — cotton, hemp, silk, wool, etc. The *kustarny* production has been developing alongside with big industries, in contrast to conditions in other countries. The di-

mensions of the *kustarny* production were so large in the Forties that in the province of Vladimir, for instance, in the district of Shuisk, there were one thousand two hundred looms in the factories, while in the peasant-huts there were about twenty thousand of them; and throughout the province of Vladimir there were eighteen thousand looms in the factories and eighty thousand in the villages. The manufacturers complained to the Government, and petitioned for the curtailment of the petty industry. But the Government was not inclined to heed the complaints, since it sided with the gentry who were glad to see their bondmen earning considerable money, thus enabling the masters to raise high *obroks*.

In the history of the tariff-legislation during that period the most active worker had been the Minister of Finance, Count Y. F. Kankrin, whom we have mentioned before, and who had occupied his responsible post almost twenty-one years (from 1823 to 1844).[1]

[1] Kankrin was a man of an original and remarkable mind. He was German by origin; his father was invited by Catherine to come to Russia and manage the salt business. The young Kankrin was educated in a good German university, and had arrived in Russia by the end of the eighteenth century. For some time he had no definite occupation, but during the Napoleonic wars he came to the front, when, as an officer in the Commissariat he appeared to be an unusual phenomenon, since he was perhaps the only honest and educated person there. On one hand he naturally attracted bitter opposition and attacks, but on the other hand he won the attention of the superior authorities and even of Alexander.

The Tzar soon appreciated the value of Kankrin who proved to be well informed not only in the provision of the army, but in military administration, in general. In 1812 Kankrin was made General-Provision-Master of one army, and then of the entire army. He showed extraordinary ability not only in that branch of activity, but also in military tactics, and in the Council of War he greatly influenced the author of the Scythian plan, General Pful. Later Kankrin published a book on the theory of war, which again attracted the attention of Alexander.

When the war was transferred to Western Europe, Kankrin soon distinguished himself even there as the most resourceful and efficient

On the very eve of Kankrin's appointment as Minister of Finance the liberal tariff of 1819 was annulled, and the Government returned for a long time to protectionism. The new tariff of 1822 was worked out with Kankrin's aid. The protectionist system remained in power during his entire administration, which led the public to believe that he was a rabid and narrow protectionist, and hated free trade. This view is not just. Kankrin understood well the advantages of free trade, but he claimed that at the given moment Russia was in need of national independence, that with its low stage of culture the country would fall an easy prey to foreign industry (particularly to the interests of such a developed and aggressive country as England) under a free trade system.

From this point of view he considered it necessary to protect

Provision-Master, and acquired a universal reputation as the most competent of war-economists.

Upon the discovery of enormous abuses in the military department in Russia, and when the Minister of War, Prince Gorchakov, was arraigned before a court, the general expectation was that Kankrin would succeed to his place; but Alexander evidently had forgotten him. In 1818, however, Kankrin once more came to the Tzar's notice, by presenting to Alexander a capable memorandum about the liberation of the serfs, a memorandum that served, in the opinion of many, as the impulse that caused the latter to commission Arakcheiev to work out a plan for the gradual extinction of serfdom.

In 1822 Alexander finally decided that he could no longer keep in office Minister of Finance, Guriev, the secret of whose influence (he kept his position eleven years) is to be found in his faculty of making friends with the powerful spheres through distributing big sums of money under various pretexts. In 1822 there was a famine in White Russia; Guriev considerably curtailed the sums assigned for the starving peasants, but at the same time he allowed seven hundred thousand rubles for the purchase of an estate from an influential landowner who was in need of money. Upon the discovery of this Guriev was discharged, and by Arakcheiev's advice Alexander offered the post to Kankrin.

Even earlier than Arakcheiev, Kankrin was appreciated by Speransky, who said during his exile in Perm that in his opinion, Kankrin was the only man capable of managing the Russian finances.

the development of Russian production. Yet he never allowed too high privileges for native manufacturers by the aid of exorbitant custom duties; on the contrary, he watched to see that Russian industry did not fall asleep, and he constantly regulated the customs system in order to force the Russian manufacturers to pay attention to all improvements in the technique of production, under the threat of foreign competition. For this reason his conditionally protective tariff was modified many times with this view in mind. In certain commodities the custom dues had been constantly lowered, especially when Kankrin deemed it necessary to encourage Russian industry from the "other end," threatening it with foreign competition. Thus his protectionism was quite moderate and wise.

On the other hand, his tariff policy was dictated also by fiscal considerations. We must bear in mind that when he accepted the portfolio of Minister of Finance, the finances were at a very low ebb; the treasury in 1822 was almost empty; no loans could be made on tolerable conditions, and the course of the paper-money did not rise in spite of the fact that in the last years of Guriev's administration, owing to his system of extinguishing the assignation-debt, that debt had decreased from eight hundred to five hundred and ninety-five million rubles. This decrease was accomplished at the price of loans arranged for very heavy interest, so that the non-interest-bearing assignation-debt had become a debt with the obligation of paying out constant high interest. Kankrin came to the conclusion that under such conditions there was no sense in extinguishing the assignations, but he strove to make no more loans and to issue no more assignations. His principle was that the aim of a financial policy should be not the growth of fiscal income, but the increase of national welfare, under which he understood mainly the welfare of the masses.

With this aim in view, Kankrin was strictly economical and opposed loans and heavy taxation. In his practical activity he

avoided the increase of taxes, but tried to lower the budgets of various departments, worrying but little about the numerous enemies that he made among the higher bureaucracy by such measures. I have already mentioned how unrelenting he had been even with Nicolas. His system of economy gave noticeable results in the very first years of his administration, and created on the European money-markets a far different attitude towards the Russian credit than the one that had existed during Guriev.

Kankrin applied the same principles of national economy to the tariff question. He considered that custom dues should be raised on objects of luxury and on commodities consumed by the richer classes, and in this direction he constantly raised the tariff. Under him the customs income rose from eleven million to twenty-six million rubles, i.e., two and a half times.

In order to bring to an end the tariff question, we shall take up the history of the Russo-Polish commercial and customs relations. Poland, more developed culturally, especially in respect to industry which could better flourish there than in Russia for the reasons cited above, looked upon Russia as a desirable market for her products, and moreover, she wanted to exploit the Asiatic markets, which could be made possible only by free transit through Russia. In 1826 Prince Lubetzky, Minister of Finance for the Kingdom of Poland, arrived at Petrograd with the special aim of obtaining tariff privileges for Poland; ignoring the Constitution of 1815, he pointed out that Poland was in fact a part of Russia. Kankrin put forth weighty arguments against the Prince. In his opinion even the existing customs system between the two countries was detrimental for the Russian population. At the formation of the Kingdom of Poland it was agreed that the raw materials of both countries were to be exchanged free of duty; as to manufactured commodities, those produced from native raw material were taxed with a negligible duty, not more than one per cent. of the cost of the ware, while for manufactures from foreign material there was a three per

cent. duty *ad valorem,* but for certain commodities special duties were arranged, for instance, products of the cotton industry were taxed at fifteen per cent., sugar at twenty-five per cent. The chief commodity of Polish manufacturing industry — cloth — was taxed at three per cent., while Russian cotton manufactures were taxed at fifteen per cent.

The Moscow manufacturers naturally complained vehemently against such an order of things, and Kankrin in his arguments against Lubetzky indicated that not only did he not consider the abolition of internal customs possible, but that he intended to raise the duties on certain commodities the competition of which hurt Russian manufacturers. After the insurrection of 1831, when Poland had ceased to exist as an independent state, and the Government considered the complete incorporation of Poland, the custom-tariff between Russia and Poland appeared to be an anomaly. The question aroused lengthy discussions and was settled only toward the Fifties, after the death of Kankrin, by a special Commission. Trengoborsky, the learned Polish economist, who was recommended, it appears, by Lubetzky, took active part in the work of that Commission. In the Fifties the frontier line between Russia and Poland was abolished, while in regard to foreign trade differentiated duties were introduced, which were adapted to the conditions of both countries, and varied according to whether the imported goods were sent to Poland or to Russia.

An important question of the financial policy at that time, as it is also at present, was the military budget. Kankrin had attained a considerable economy in the *ordinary* expenses on the army during the first twelve years of his administration. But during that period alongside with the decrease in the ordinary expenses Russia had gone through a number of wars which demanded *extraordinary* expenses; these, in spite of Kankrin's opposition, had to be covered by loans. The war with Persia broke out soon after the accession of Nicolas, and in 1828–29, came

the war with Turkey, which cost over one hundred and twenty million rubles in silver; then finally the Polish campaign of 1831 proved quite expensive. The war-loans in the first years reached four hundred million rubles in silver. But we must say that those loans were much better than the former assignations-issues. In general, as I have said, the reputation of Russian finances so improved under the management of Kankrin, that in the Thirties Russian papers were quoted on foreign exchanges almost at par, which had never happened before.

Almost all investigators of the history of Russian finances reproach Kankrin for the indisputably negative measure which he carried through in 1826 — the Beverage Reform. As we remember, under Guriev private contracts were abolished, and a system of fiscal beverage-monopoly was introduced, which continued to exist also under Kankrin until 1826. The wine-income increased in the beginning, but soon began to fall tremendously, owing to disorders in the fiscal management and to the unbelievable thievery that reigned there.

It had become clear that it was impossible to carry on the business in the absence of a staff of officials who would be to some extent honest and prepared. In 1826 Nicolas ordered Kankrin to prepare a report about the regulation of the wine-income. This report was very objective. It expounded the ways existing in various countries of exploiting the wine-income, and indicated the possibility of three systems: the fiscal system, then in existence in Russia, which monopolised all wine-trade; the system of wine-contracts, which had existed till the beginning of the Twenties, and consisted in giving over to private contractors the right to exploit the wine-monopoly; and lastly, the system of free trade in wine under an excise collected from every bottle or other vessel. The last system was upheld by Mordvinov, but Kankrin pointed out that it might be good in theory, while in practice it required some culture, and mainly an organisation under strict control, which, in the absence of efficient officials, was impos-

sible. For the same reason he considered the existing fiscal system impracticable. He indicated the possibility of a fourth system — the distribution of the wine-income among provinces which would be taxed with a certain amount and would collect it by the aid of local institutions. But Kankrin mistrusted the local organs, and asserted that the tempting wine-income would prove the nobility to be as easily corrupted as the officials.

Since the State could not relinquish the exploitation of the large wine-income, Kankrin came to the conclusion that the least detrimental system was that of private contracts; he admitted that the lessees would accumulate enormous sums at the people's expense, but he argued that if such accumulation of money should be allowed at all, preference should be given to the contractors who would utilise that capital for industry, to the people's advantage, whereas from the thievery of the officials there was no gain even for industry.

Such were the considerations which led him to restore the contracts-system. The new measure proved a great evil; not only did the contractors wax rich, but they bribed and corrupted the entire local administration. All the provincial officials received from the contractors additional salary, not smaller than the regular salary. It is natural that when the interests of the contractors collided with others, the interests of the former were always given preference both by the administrative and by the judicial authorities. The evil of that system was not redeemed by the considerations of Kankrin in 1826.

Perhaps the most significant of Kankrin's undertakings was the currency-reform. The reform brought about the devaluation of the assignations and their redemption at lowered prices, but its chief aim was not in fiscal interests; Kankrin's idea was to facilitate commercial intercourse. The course of the paper-ruble had always vacillated, and as a matter of fact several courses existed: there was a bill-course used in transactions with foreign merchants, a taxation-course by which assignations

were accepted by the Treasury, finally there existed a common-people-course used arbitrarily at private transactions. The last course was the most wavering; at the very same time it might vary in places from three hundred and fifty to four hundred and twenty copecks in assignations for one silver ruble. This was caused by the fact that in view of the constantly falling course of the assignations it had become customary to indicate a much lower course in transactions for future delivery or purchase, so that in certain cases the course would be artificially lowered to four hundred and twenty copecks per ruble instead of the normal course of three hundred and fifty or three hundred and sixty copecks. As a result the buying public (especially peasants) had often to pay much more than the actual course required, and in the general mistrust of the unstable assignations and search for constant metal-money, it had become customary to import foreign coins and sell them to the people. These private transactions brought further confusion. In view of these conditions Kankrin decided to have a law issued, calling for the conducting of all transactions in silver, for which purpose the assignations were to be given a definite obligatory course by which the Treasury would redeem them. After an exchange of opinions with Speransky, who left a memorandum on this question shortly before his death, Kankrin determined to place the course at three hundred and fifty copecks per ruble. The law was issued in June, 1839, and it had splendid results; an end came to all the frauds and confusions in the common-people-course transactions. A few years later Kankrin issued the so-called *depositki,* paper certificates for twenty-five rubles given by the Treasury as receipts for deposited metal-money or gold and silver bars; it was declared that the deposits would be kept intact and handed back upon demand. The *depositki* at once acquired popularity; in a few months, toward the end of 1842, more than twenty-five million rubles in coin were thus deposited. In two years the Government was in a position to issue more

than forty million rubles' worth of paper-money, at par with the silver course.

Thus the national system had three kinds of circulating money-coin, *depositki,* and assignations. Soon Kankrin decided to issue credit bills, as in other countries, which would not be secured by an equivalent amount of metal-money, but only by a certain fund required for uninterrupted exchange. The *credit-bills* were issued, with a fund of one-sixth of their amount in metal-money. The operation proved successful, the new bills circulated freely, and their course remained at par.

Then came the idea of supplanting all assignations with one form of paper-money exchangeable for coin. Kankrin had apprehensions that with the introduction of paper-money on such a scale there would arise in the course of time, especially after his death or resignation, a temptation to overissue such money, and in the result the old assignation story would repeat itself. But Nicolas, at his accession completely ignorant in financial affairs, had gradually acquired from Kankrin some knowledge of the subject, and considered himself an experienced financier; when Kankrin hesitated Nicolas presented his own project in which he argued with his Minister, and advocated the possibility of supplanting all assignations and *depositki* with credit-bills. At this he proposed to redeem all assignations at the price fixed in 1839, i.e., at three hundred and fifty copecks per silver ruble. As the total amount of assignations was equal to five hundred and ninety-five million rubles, it was necessary to have a fund of one hundred and seventy million silver rubles for their redemption; this amount required in security for an equivalent number of credit-bills one-sixth, i.e., the State Treasury was to have a constant sum of about twenty-eight and a half million rubles in coin. Nicolas believed in the possibility of realising that plan at once; for this reason he determined to discontinue the further issue of *depositki,* but in the course of their return to the Treasury to destroy them, take a corresponding sum from the depository

fund, and issue for that sum new credit-bills; one-sixth of the metal fund should be kept as a security for the credit-bills, and the rest should be placed in a reserve fund, for new issues. In Nicolas's view the whole operation was to take not more than five years.

Although Kankrin showed a stubborn opposition, Nicolas' views, naturally upheld by all Ministers, were finally adopted. The operation passed very successfully; after the deposit of twenty-eight million rubles in coin as the fund of one-sixth the amount of the issued credit-bills, there still remained in the Treasury about sixty-six million rubles in coin, which sum was solemnly transported to the fortress of Peter and Paul, counted over and deposited. Thus the Government was in possession of a reserve-fund that held up the course of the paper-money until the war of 1853.

A few words should be said about Kankrin's general cultural activity, which was manifested in founding educational institutions for the spread of technical knowledge. In 1828 he established the Technological Institute; he reorganised and, so to speak, put on their feet the Forestry and Mining Institutes. He was the first to introduce industrial exhibitions which occurred periodically at Moscow. An agricultural periodical was founded by him, which he supplied with his articles, and an Institute of Agriculture, in Gory-Goretzk. Petrograd still bears the stamp of Kankrin's activity — in the numerous buildings erected by him, like the Bourse, and other governmental and educational edifices.

CHAPTER XVIII

WE shall now examine the course of education and the development of the mental and political movement among the *intelligentzia* during the Thirties and Forties.

Admiral Shishkov, inherited by Nicolas from the preceding reign, remained at his post as Minister of Education until 1828; from 1828 to 1833 the post was occupied by the Pietist, Prince Lieven. S. S. Uvarov, the most famous of all Russian Ministers of Education, retained the post from 1833 till the beginning of Nicolas' third period — 1849. It was Uvarov who had laid the peculiar Nicolaievian stamp on the educational activity of that epoch, although in fact he was only a talented executor of Nicolas' orders. Uvarov's rôle in the Ministry of Education was by the significance of his reforms as important as the rôle of Kankrin in the history of Russian finances and as the rôle of Kiselev in the history of peasant-legislation.

We have seen that from the beginning Nicolas had turned his attention to the question of education which he intended to base on the principle of preservation of the youth from revolutionary tendencies. The conservative programme received a definite stimulus after 1831, and the chief promulgator of those views came to be the successor of the weak Lieven, S. S. Uvarov, recommended by Karamzin. We remember Uvarov's opposition to the reactionary activity of Prince Golitzin before the Twenties, and his radical utterances about freedom and education; Uvarov of the epoch of Nicolas was a completely changed person. He had become an obedient servant of his master, and agreed with him that the population needed just as much education as was

required for the technical needs of the state, and that the public should be carefully guarded against the infiltration of pernicious political ideas.

The statutes of the primary and secondary schools were revised from this point of view by the Committee of December 6, 1826; in accordance with Nicolas' views, the net of schools introduced by Yankovich de Mirievo was discarded, and new statutes were issued December 28, 1828. This reactionary measure was carried through during the period which I have characterised as not opposed to Progress.

When Deputy Minister under Lieven, Uvarov had been ordered to investigate the University of Moscow and other provincial institutions. On his return the clever careerist presented a written report, in which his views so skilfully coincided with those of Nicolas, that the latter was bound to appoint him Minister. In his impressions of the University of Moscow, Uvarov indicated the pernicious influence of Western European ideas, and added: "I firmly believe that we shall be able to avoid those mistakes, and shall succeed in gradually capturing the minds of the youth and bringing them to that point where there must merge together — a regulated, fundamental education with a deep conviction and warm belief in the true-Russian conservative principles of *Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality,* which present the last anchor of our salvation and the surest pledge of the strength and majesty of our country."

The Emperor saw in Uvarov an assuring means for the promulgation of those ideas which he considered salutary and necessary for the young mind. As Minister, Uvarov definitely declared that he considered the main purpose of his Ministry — the damming of the influx of new ideas into Russia; he wished to prolong Russia's youthfulness, and if he could keep back the development of the country for about half a century, he "would die in peace."

In his above mentioned Report Uvarov jesuitically advocated

the " multiplication of mental dikes for the struggle with destructive notions." This principle became the foundation of the subsequent policy of the Ministry of Education, at the head of which stood the most learned man of his age, who intended to implant " true enlightenment " and at the same time preserve the youth from imported revolutionary ideas. One is inclined to presume that Uvarov had been converted to profess what he used to mock at: to believe in " fire which does not scald."

Discussions had been going on yet in Shishkov's Committee about the desirable programme for Gymnasia. It was decided to introduce the Classical method with Latin as a compulsory subject, and with both Latin and Greek in several Gymnasia in the Capitals. At the beginning the Classical programme did not exclude other studies, but the longer that system lasted, the longer Uvarov remained Minister, the more subjects were thrown overboard from the curriculum; in 1844 statistics was excluded, in 1847 — logic, in 1846 the course of mathematics was abridged, and by the end of the Forties the programme of studies for secondary schools was considerably shortened.

At that time the nobles sent their children quite willingly to the Gymnasia. This was conditioned on one hand by the necessity of having a diploma for State service, and also by the exhaustion of the contingent of domestic teachers that had been furnished by the French émigrés. Thus the Government finally saw its plans carried out, and the demand for Gymnasia grew. Accordingly, in 1826 there were forty-eight Gymnasia, while in the Fifties — seventy-four; at the beginning of Nicolas' reign the number of students was seven thousand, and by its end, eighteen thousand. The number of District Schools also increased, but the quality of their instruction deteriorated. This was due to the reorganisation of the school-management. By the Statute of 1804, which had signified the most brilliant epoch in the history of Russian education, the universities stood at the head of the provincial school-management. But the Statute was

radically changed in 1835, the organisation of the universities was greatly modified, and the primary and secondary schools passed from their jurisdiction to that of the District Curators, who were now in many cases local Governor-Generals, and in Siberia — Governors.

The Statute of 1835 deprived the universities of autonomy. True they preserved the right to elect Rectors and place professors in vacancies, but at the same time the Minister of Education had the right not to approve of the elected functionaries, and to appoint his own candidates. We must, however, mention that there still existed a tendency toward developing good professors, and during the Thirties it was a practice to send young candidates abroad, the results of which were splendid. During the Forties a whole pleiad of young Russian scholars who had been abroad appeared, and they contributed greatly to the education of the following generation of the *intelligentzia*. To mention a few names: Granovsky, Riedkin, Kriukov, Buslaiev (in Moscow), Meyer (Kazan), Nievolin, Kutorga (Petrograd). The Moscow Curator, Count S. G. Stroganov, a well educated man, made many efforts to improve the quality of the personnel, but he liked to interfere with the system of instruction and even with the programmes of individual professors, dictated desirable tendencies to them, and in general managed the university as an exemplary boss.

The number of universities did not increase; the University of St. Vladimir, opened in Kiev in 1834, took the place of the University of Vilna, which was closed after the insurrection of 1831.

As to the position of the *intelligentzia,* their ranks were greatly depleted after December 14, 1825. The flower of the *intelligentzia,* if we understand by it the independently thinking society, was cut down by the ruthless hand of the victor, and exiled to Siberia. Those who remained were terrorised and prevented from expressing their ideas.

"Thirty years ago," wrote Herzen in the Fifties, "Russia of the future existed exclusively among a few boys who had just passed their childhood; in them lay the heritage of universal knowledge and of purely national Russ. This new life vegetated as grass trying to grow on the lips of a crater which has not yet cooled." When those boys grew up, the young generation was split in the same two currents by which Western ideas had been flowing into Russia since the days of Catherine. Again there appeared on one side those who had absorbed the French ideas of the end of the eighteenth century, the ideas of the French Revolution, and the ideas of the Decembrists who had also been brought up on the French ideology; on the other side there appeared the followers of German thought, German Idealism, and of the Post-Kantian metaphysics which had deeply penetrated the Russian thinking society of the Twenties and Thirties. The followers of the second current were now in the majority, as was clearly demonstrated by the nature of the university circles around which the young generation of the Thirties concentrated. At the end of Alexander's reign the French ideas, reflected in the plans of Pestel and Nikita Muraviov, were undisputably dominant; but even then followers of German philosophers, particularly of Schelling began to form circles. Already in 1804 an ardent expounder of Schelling's philosophy appeared in Petrograd in the person of Vellansky, a professor at the Medical Academy. Schelling's monistic-idealistic philosophy which tried to reconcile the objectivity of the existence of nature with the possibility of its speculative contemplation, had brought him to his *Naturphilosophie,* which appealed to natural scientists and medical students. This explains the fact that in Russia Schellingianism was first introduced by Vellansky, Professor at the Medical Academy, and by M. G. Pavlov, professor of physics and mineralogy at the University of Moscow. Herzen relates in his *Past and Meditations* the significance of Pavlov's lectures for his (Herzen's) student-generation during the first course in

the Physico-Mathematical department. Pavlov would at once startle his students with the question: "You want to know Nature, but what is Nature, and what is To know?" Thus before expounding physics he would explain the theory of Consciousness according to Schelling. Later, however, that philosophy was preached by professors of the history of philosophy (Galich), of the theory of literature and æsthetics (Davidov, Nadezhdin), and others, and also in literature where the forerunners were grouped around the circle of the Moscow "Lovers of Wisdom," founded in the Twenties by Prince D. V. Odoievsky and D. V. Venevitinov, who began to issue in 1824 a literary almanach, *Mnemozina,* with the co-operation of Wilhelm Küchelberg and Professor Pavlov. To the "Lovers of Wisdom" belonged also the future Moscow Slavophiles, the brothers Kireievsky and Khomiakov, also Pogodin and Shevyrev, who undertook in 1826 the publication of the *Moscow Messenger.* Through Venevitinov and Küchelberg Pushkin was attracted to the publications of the "Lovers of Wisdom."

Mnemozina was devoted to the struggle with the ideas of the French Encyclopedists of the eighteenth century, and to the spread of the ideas of German Idealism. The direct successor of *Mnemozina* was the *Moscow Messenger,* but in spite of its gifted contributors this publication soon died, owing to the inexperience of its young editors. In 1831 the chief organ of Schellingianism in Russia was the *Telescope,* published by Nadezhdin, Professor of Æsthetics at the University of Moscow. Parallel with this strictly philosophical magazine there had been published at Moscow since 1825 the *Moscow Telegraph,* founded by the many-sided journalist, N. A. Polevoy[1] at first with the close co-operation of Prince P. A. Viazemsky, one of the Arzamasians. The *Moscow Telegraph* was char-

[1] The first Russian writer in the nineteenth century who was not a nobleman by birth. Pushkin, in one of his virulent epigrams, called him "plebeian."—TR.

acterised by its publishers as an Encyclopedic organ; it preached Romanticism, and struggled with the Pseudo-Classicism of the old *European Messenger* that was edited then by Professor Kachenovsky.

In spite of their theoretic differences, both the *Telescope* and the *Moscow Telegraph* were progressive organs, and advocated the liberal views then predominant in Western Europe. But the *Telegraph,* an eclectic and more superficial publication, was more acceptable to the unprepared readers, while the *Telescope* had a more select audience, among the university *intelligentzia.* For this reason the Censorship Department, whose actual head had been Uvarov, as Deputy Minister, since 1832, looked with suspicion on Polevoy's popular magazine, and stopped its publication in 1833. Nadezhdin's *Telescope,* in view of its smaller circle of readers, was treated by the Government with more tolerance, and it appeared unmolested until 1836, when the famous " Philosophical Letter " of Chaadaiev appeared.

The author of that letter, P. J. Chaadaiev, was a remarkable personality, and has left an important impression in the history of the Russian *intelligentzia.* Although his activity belonged to the Thirties and Forties, by his age, and particularly by his education and connections, he belonged to the preceding generation, which was removed from the scene after December 14, 1825. Together with Pushkin they were the only fragments of that generation of Russian *intelligentzia* saved by accident from the catastrophe. A brilliant Guard-officer, an aristocrat by birth (he was a grandson of the historian, Prince Shcherbatov), brought up as most of his contemporaries on the ideas of the end of the eighteenth century, he nevertheless early separated himself from his friends, and lived a solitary life. After the famous incident in the Semionovsky regiment, when he was sent with a report to Alexander at Leibach, he resigned, lived alone, and concentrated his thoughts on Mysticism. In his infatuation with Christian Mysticism (in its Catholic form), Chaadaiev re-

jected Hegel whose system did not agree with Christian revelation, but became an ardent adherent of Schelling, when the latter came in his second period to the reconciliation of the conclusions of the Idealistic philosophy with the dogmas of the Christian faith; in this respect Chaadaiev agreed perfectly with the subsequent founder of the Slavophil doctrine, I. I. Kireievsky. He had another point of contact with his later opponents, the Slavophils, in that he also admitted a radical difference between the development of Western Europe and Russia, on a religious basis; but that difference was not in his opinion in favour of Russia. In the Catholicism of Western Europe he saw a mighty and faithful guard of the principles of Christianity and Christian civilisation, while Russia appeared to him in the gloomiest light, a mediocrity which stood on the parting of the ways between East and West, and had neither great traditions nor a strong religious foundation for her development. Russia's only salvation he saw in her immediate and complete adoption of the religious and cultural principles of the West. He undertook the mission of propagating his views among the Moscow salons of the Thirties; he could not appear in the press because of the censorship conditions. His "Philosophical Letter," which belonged to a series of other Letters (they were published recently, with the exception of a few that have been lost), had not been intended for publication, but was written to a private person. He read those letters to his acquaintances, however, and Nadezhdin asked him to place them in his *Telescope*. The appearance of the first Letter produced the impression of an exploded bomb.

It was the sharpest and most daring protest against the system of "official Nationalism" that had been proclaimed by the Government with the aid of Uvarov. In contrast to the Government's praise of Russian historical principles and Russian reality, Chaadaiev's view on Russian history was stated thus: "At the very beginning we had savage barbarism, later rude superstition, then a cruel, humiliating domination of the conquerors, a domina-

tion the traces of which have not been erased from our mode of living to this day. Such is the sad history of our youth; we have not had that age of boundless activity, of the poetical display of the nation's moral forces. The epoch of our social life, corresponding to that age, was filled with a dark, colourless existence, without power, without energy.

"We have no charming memories, no strong, instructive examples in popular legends. Cast a glance at all the centuries of our existence, at all the expanse that we are occupying now, and you will not find a single reminiscence which would arrest you, a single monument which would tell you about the past in a strong, vivid, picturesque way.

"We live in indifference to all, in a narrow horizon, with no past or future . . ."

A strange fate has separated Russia from the universal life of mankind, and in order to become like other nations, she must — according to Chaadaiev —" begin over again the whole education of man. For this purpose we have before us the history of nations and the results of movements of ages. . . ."

The impression made by that Letter can be easily imagined: the *Telescope* was discontinued, Nadezhdin was exiled to Vologda, and Chaadaiev was officially declared insane.

In the Capitals and in the provinces the Letter produced an impression of a scandal, and aroused general confusion. Even the most progressive minds felt offended by Chaadaiev's tone of utter contempt for the Russian past. In the Moscow circles hot discussions took place, and among Chaadaiev's main opponents were his friends, the subsequent Slavophils, Kireievsky and Khomiakov. One year later Chaadaiev wrote — naturally not for publication — his *Apologia of an Insane,* in which he practically reiterated his former views, but asserted that nobody loved his country more than he did, and that the voice of the people is not always the voice of God. His decent opponents, like Kireievsky, etc., refused to take issue with a man whose

teachings were officially condemned; but the former publishers of the *Moscow Messenger,* Shevyrev and Pogodin, did not scruple about the delicate situation, and in their desire to gain the favour of Uvarov they rudely attacked the man who had been ordered to keep silence. In Pogodin's *Muscovite* for the year 1841 there appeared an article under the title "A view of a Russian on European Education," in which Western Europe was diagnosed as a decaying, infectious organism, from which Russia should be guarded. Accepting Uvarov's Trinity — Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality, as a sound foundation for the life of Russia, the author of the article declared his perfect agreement with the views of the Government, and ended with the following exclamation: "By these three cardinal feelings our Russ is powerful, and our future is sure. A man of the Tzar's counsel, to whom our growing citizens are intrusted, has already expressed them in a profound thought, and has made them the basis of the education of the people."

Personally Count Uvarov did not, however, consider his position quite firm, and he was well aware of the existence among the *intelligentzia* of living forces ready to fight; the suppression of those forces formed his main purpose. In his report on the decenary of his management of the Ministry of Education he wrote (in 1843): "The direction dictated by Your Majesty to the Ministry, and its triple formula were bound to arouse the opposition of all those who had still preserved the stamp of Liberal and Mystical ideas: of the Liberals, because the Ministry, proclaiming Autocracy, declared its firm desire to return to the Russian Monarchical principle; of the Mystics — because the word Orthodoxy clearly indicated the intention of the Ministry to hold fast to the teachings of Christianity, and to do away with all the Mystical ghosts that had often obscured the clarity of the Holy traditions of the Church; finally the word Nationality has provoked our enemies' animosity for the daring assertion that the Ministry considered Russia mature and worthy

of marching not behind, but at least alongside with the other European nationalities."

Indeed, about that time, the beginning of the Forties, a new Westernising movement was formed among the public, which opposed the "official Nationalism," rejected the point of view of the Slavophiles, and which soon became, in spite of repressions and persecutions, the leader of the young generation. This movement, unlike that of Chaadaiev and the Slavophiles, was based not on theological principles, but on their rejection. In order to follow through the origin and fate of that movement, and also of its antipode — Slavophilism, we must turn to the history of the circles of the Thirties, in which lay, in the words of Herzen, "Russia of the future."

At the beginning of the Thirties the thinking students of the University of Moscow were grouped around two circles: that of Stankevich and that of Herzen. Stankevich's circle consisted of persons interested chiefly in questions of philosophy and ethics, and who were under the influence of Schellingians, like Pavlov and Nadezhdin. To that circle belonged: Bielinsky, on one end, and Constantine Aksakov, on the other. Later they were joined by Bakunin, Botkin, Katkov, Granovsky (from abroad), and partly Samarin (with the aid of Aksakov) — all stars of first magnitude in the subsequent history of the Russian *intelligentzia.*

The men of Herzen's circle were interested mostly in political and social problems; among them were Ogarev, Satin, Ketcher, Passeck, and others. The most brilliant personality in the circle was, of course, Herzen, who remained a life friend of Ogarev. The circle considered themselves direct heirs of the Decembrists and through them of the ideas of French philosophy and the French Revolution. Of contemporary thought they adhered most of all to the socialistic doctrines of Saint-Simon and his followers.

The circle of Herzen was soon disbanded; the members sang revolutionary songs at a party arranged on their graduation from

the university, were arrested, spent several months under arrest, and were then exiled to various remote provinces. From 1833 to 1839 Herzen lived in Perm, in Viatka, and later in Vladimir. Upon his return to Moscow he found Hegel's philosophy in full domination of the upper *intelligentzia* circles, and he had to take up its study and join the men who had been brought up in the circle of Stankevich (the latter was at that time dying abroad, in his twenty-seventh year).

Monistic Idealism in Western philosophy had passed from Kant through Fichte to Schelling; but in Russia, as we have seen, the acquaintance with German Idealism began with Schelling, while Kant received no audience. The members of the circle of Stankevich were attracted more by Fichte, however, especially one of them, Mikhail Bakunin, who although he received only a domestic education and was a graduate of the School of Artillery, had a natural gift for dialectic reasoning and philosophy in general. He had become interested in this when still in the Military school under the influence of Venevitinov's articles and of La Harpe's " History and Theory of Rhetoric," at the end of which were expounded the theories of Locke and Condillac. Stankevich and Bakunin, little attracted by Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason,* became interested in the conclusions of Fichte's Idealistic philosophy, which he applied for the solution of German and universal ethical and political problems of his age. Bakunin imparted his interest in Fichte to Bielinsky who, not knowing German, absorbed Schelling and Fichte from discussions with his friends. Bielinsky's articles in the *Telescope* for 1836 bore the stamp of Fichte's exalted Idealism which considered moral problems of paramount importance. From Fichte, Bakunin, Bielinsky, and their friends soon passed to Hegel, and the advent of the new philosophy had marked the end of the Thirties.

Bielinsky had also to depend on what he had been told about Hegel by Bakunin and Katkov. For this reason Bielinsky like

many of his contemporaries not only in Russia, but even among the German Hegelians, misinterpreted Hegel's logical maxim, "All reality is reasonable," as "everything that exists has a reasonable purpose." As many other Hegelians, Bielinsky observed the life about him from a conservative point of view, tried to justify existing institutions, and came out with a panegyric for the Russian social and political order (his articles in 1838–1840).

Of course such a sensitive and noble mind as Bielinsky's could not long remain under that influence, and he soon passionately rejected his former beliefs, and went to the other extreme: instead of examining the philosophy which he misunderstood, he decided that German Idealism was bound to draw one to absurd conclusions, and that one should better turn to the positive political teachings of the contemporary French. This new turn in Bielinsky was enhanced by his meeting with Herzen who had recently come back to Moscow from his exile. Herzen's influence was reflected in Bielinsky's subsequent activity which was transferred to Kraievsky's monthly *Annals of the Fatherland* in Petrograd. Soon Bielinsky was glad to hear that Bakunin, with whom he had quarrelled before leaving Moscow, had changed his conception of Hegelianism after a thorough study of his philosophy in Berlin, and having joined the Left Wing of the Hegelians, he became a prominent expounder of Materialistic Monism.

Bielinsky's further literary activity has an enormous significance in the history of the Russian *intelligentzia;* the magazines *Annals of the Fatherland* and the *Contemporary* became the most read publications in the country, and during the Forties Bielinsky was the real intellectual leader of the young generation. He no longer advocated the ideas of German philosophy, but promulgated the ideas of those social and political doctrines which he had adapted with the aid of Herzen from French literature. His attitude became sharply hostile to the "official Na-

tionalism" which was expressed by the *Muscovite,* issued by Pogodin in co-operation with Shevyrev; but the *Muscovite* was not his only enemy at that time.

About the middle of the Forties the Moscow Slavophiles definitely formulated their views. Some of them, like the brothers Kireievsky, Khomiakov, Koshelev, were of the former Lovers of Wisdom; others, like Constantine Aksakov and Yuriy Samarin, were from Bielinsky's comrades in the circle of Stankevich. They were all pure, noble minds, who had worked out an original, solid, and well-proportioned system, their own historiosophy, which like that of Chaadaiev was based on theological principles, and they had also emphasised the contradictions and contrasts in the development of the two different worlds of contemporary mankind: the Western — Latin-German, and the Eastern — Byzantine-Slav, or Greco-Russian. But in direct opposition to Chaadaiev the Slavophiles idealised extremely the whole course of development of the Russo-Slavic world, and regarded negatively the entire Western-European culture.

In their conception the Orthodox faith and the Russian people had preserved the ancient principle of spiritual Christianity in all its purity, while in the West it had been distorted by the casuistry of Catholicism, by the Papal authority, and by the prevalence of material culture over spiritual. The consequent development of those circumstances had brought, in their opinion, at first Protestantism, and later the modern Materialism, and the denial of the Revelation and of all the truths of the Christian faith. The Slavophiles asserted that in Russia the state and society had developed on principles of freedom, on the domination of democratic, *communal,* elements, while in the West the state and society developed on principles of violence, of enslaving one class or nation by other classes or nations, which resulted in the Feudal, aristocratic form of personal ownership of land, and the landlessness of the masses.

Although there were points of contact between the teachings

of the Slavophiles and the "official Nationalism," they also had fundamental differences; the Slavophiles demanded complete freedom of speech and of creed, and full independence from the state of personal, communal, and church life — the ideas that were formulated later by Constantine Aksakov in his Memorandum to Alexander II, in which he proclaimed the famous Slavophile political formula: "The power of government — to the Tzar; the power of opinion — to the people."

Bielinsky attacked the Slavophiles as sharply and passionately as he did the representatives of "official Nationalism," especially after the attempt (which failed) of the Slavophiles to take over Pogodin's *Muscovite,* in 1845. Regarding the Slavophiles with utter intolerance, Bielinsky reproached his comrades — the Moscow Westerners, Granovsky and Herzen — for their mild treatment of them, and particularly for their willingness to contribute to their publications. Bielinsky himself decisively rejected the thought of such participation in his enemies' organs, and he used to say: "I am a Hebrew by nature, and will not eat at the same table with a Philistine."

The censorship conditions allowed the Westerners to carry on their ideals only between the lines, and the Slavophiles were unable to organise any stable organ of their own, so that most of their debates took place either in private houses or in sporadic almanachs; the *Moscow Almanach* appeared in 1846 and in 1847, and again in 1852, but by that time any discussion of political and social questions had become impossible. In this respect the revolutions of 1848 had played a decisive rôle.

With the accession of Nicolas the attitude of the Government had radically changed towards the Schismatics and particularly toward the Sectarians. The position of certain sects had become worse in the last years of Alexander under the influence of the bigoted and fanatic tendencies in the sphere of Public Wor-

ship, expressed by Archimandrite Fotiy and by the Metropolitan of Petrograd, Seraphim.

Although Fotiy was treated unfavourably by the new Monarch who in general did not sympathise with Orthodox fanaticism, Nicolas from the very beginning regarded the Schismatics and other dissenters very negatively, first because in his eyes they were rebels against the established Church, and secondly because of their anti-governmental tendencies. From the latter point of view the Government estimated the degree of perniciousness and dangerousness in various sects. At the same time the position of the Spiritual Christians, the *Dukhobory* and *Molokane,* whom Alexander had protected, and settled in the province of Tavrida (Crimea) changed to the worse. Under Nicolas the *Dukhobory* and *Molokane,* because of their anti-state tendencies, were declared pernicious sects. It is curious that these sects were regarded by the Government as more dangerous than such morbid sects as the *Khlysty* and the *Skoptzy;* the reason is that the latter masqued their practices behind superficial adherence to the Church, and not only prayed for the Tzar, but owing to their wealth they were able to buy the protection of corruptible officials. Whereas the *Dukhobory* and *Molokane* refused to compromise, led an irreproachably pure peasant life, and appearing as a state within a state they finally drew upon them the persecutions of the Government, in which the agents of the Third Department of His Majesty's Own Chancery played a large rôle. Back in 1826 Nicolas expressed his belief that the Sectarians (at least the most stubborn and active) should be transferred as soldiers to the Caucasus, and those incapable of military service should be exiled to Siberia. These measures were executed during the second period of his reign; in 1839, 1840, and 1841 the settlements of the *Dukhobory* and *Molokane* were abolished, and they were transported to Trans-Caucasia, while the most active of them were exiled to Siberia and put into military service. In 1841 Nicolas announced in

an Imperial ukase that he considered the safeguard of the "inviolability of the forefathers' Orthodox Church" among his subjects as one of the duties imposed on him by Providence, and he gave warning that severe repressions would be inflicted upon dissenters, and that the children of those who would be exiled for religious reasons would be taken care of by the Government.

The Government had become convinced by that time that in spite of all repressions, and the external conversion of many dissenters to the Orthodox creed, the number of sects continued to grow. It was decided to make a special study of the Schism and the sects, in order to employ more adequate measures for their eradication. The matter was entrusted confidentially to several learned persons, among whom were Yuriy Samarin (in Riga), Ivan Aksakov (in the province of Yaroslavl and in the South), and at the centre of the work was placed the ex-Professor Nadezhdin, who had been the editor of the *Telescope,* passed through a period of exile in Vologda, and then entered into the service of the Ministry of the Interior, under L. A. Perovsky. The materials collected had a great value, as for the first time they furnished the Government with more or less substantial information. Before that time the information had been accidental and quite inaccurate. For instance, in the former records the number of Schismatics in the province of Yaroslavl was put at fourteen to fifteen thousand, whereas the special investigators stated that about one-half of its population were "infected" with Schism and various sects; in the province of Vologda the former official figures of the Schismatics showed about three and a half thousand, while the special investigators counted about one-third of the population (nearly two hundred thousand), who had dissented from Orthodoxy; in the province of Chernigov numerous towns and villages were discovered completely belonging to the Schism; in the province of Kostroma, in addition to twenty thousand overt Schismatics twenty-seven thousand four hundred and eighty-five secret, and fifty-seven

thousand five hundred and seventy-one "infected" with the Schism were found. An enormous number of *Molokane* and Spiritual Christians were discovered in the provinces of Tambov and Saratov — about two hundred thousand in the first, and tens of thousands in the second.

It is no wonder, then, that while the official data about Schismatics and Sectarians showed their figures between the years 1826 and 1855 as seven hundred to eight hundred thousand, and only once (in 1837) the figures showed one million and three thousand,— a competent statistician who had access to confidential governmental data, General N. N. Obruchov, asserted that their number could not be less than eight million persons. According to the Government's classification of 1842 the Schismatics and Sectarians were divided into *most pernicious, pernicious,* and *less pernicious.* Less pernicious were the *Popovtzy,* i.e., those who accepted priests; their numbers were officially larger because they were less secret. The *Bezpopovtzy,* i.e., those who did not accept priests, but prayed for the Tzar and admitted marriage were considered pernicious. In regard to both those groups the Government decided not to destroy them but to prevent their further spread. Those *Bezpopovtzy* who refused to pray for the Tzar and did not admit marriage, and all sorts of sects, like the *Molokane, Dukhobory, Ikonobortzy, Khlysty, Skoptzy,* and others were considered most pernicious. The number of Sectarians in the Forties was probably not less than one million. In spite of the Government's decision to exterminate the "most pernicious," their numbers did not diminish and their hostility against the Government and its agents grew stronger. The latter phenomenon was true also in regard to the "least pernicious," as the *Popovtzy.* Catherine had permitted them to keep their own monasteries and hermitaries along the river Irghiz, in the province of Saratov. In the absence of their own Bishops, the *Popovtzy* had difficulty in obtaining priests, and were forced to make use of "fugitive"

priests or of "unfrocked" Orthodox priests. Nicolas rigorously persecuted the "fugitive" priests. Then the agitation grew among the Schismatics for obtaining their own Bishops who would ordain priests from their midst. There exists a story that this idea was suggested or hinted to them by the Chief of Gendarmes, Benckendorff. When they had after many efforts succeeded in obtaining from Constantinople the supernumerary Metropolitan, Amvrosiy, and had him installed with the permission of the Austrian emperor at Bielaia Krenitza, in Bukovina (1847), the Russian Government demanded that Austria dismiss and banish Amvrosiy (at that time Austria had respect for Russian demands), and had the Patriarch of Constantinople depose him. But Amvrosiy had already ordained several Bishops who were now in a position to ordain priests for the Schismatics. The Government hunted the new Bishops and priests as "fugitives," and imprisoned them in monastic prisons, which intensified the hostility of the Schismatics towards the authorities, and while some of them formally joined the official Church, the more stubborn elements joined, on the contrary, the more pernicious branches and sects. The persecutions of the Schismatics brought about new, irreconcilable sects, as the *Pilgrims,* for example, whose principle had been to use no passports and to show no obedience to the authorities, whom they regarded as the servants of Satan. Thus by the end of Nicolas' reign, owing to the ruthless struggle which the Government had carried on against the Schismatics and Sectarians, their numbers not only did not decrease, but their hostility toward the authorities and toward any sort of government had become more acute.

The number of trials and severe penalties inflicted upon dissenters of all categories grew from year to year; according to official data, between 1847 and 1852 there were over five hundred verdicts a year against them, and the number of persons tried for belonging to the Schism during those five years was twenty-six thousand four hundred and fifty-six.

The gulf between the ideology of the Government and that of the people grew and broadened during that reign in perhaps greater dimensions than even the gulf between the Government and the *intelligentzia.*

CHAPTER XIX

THE third and last period of Nicolas' reign began after the revolution of February, 1848, in France and the subsequent revolutionary outbursts in other European countries; those events marked the third period with a ruthless reactionism.

The first news about the proclamation of a republic in France greatly disturbed Nicolas. A contemporary asserts that the Emperor appeared with the telegrams in his hand at the palace of his Heir, where a ball was going on, and coming to the centre of the salon stood amidst the dancing couples, and exclaimed: "Saddle your horses, gentlemen: a republic has been proclaimed in France." At the same time, however, he rejoiced at the fall of Louis Philippe whom he considered a justly punished usurper. "Serves him right. . . . Fine, splendid," he uttered to his entourage in the study of his Heir. To prevent an attack on the part of the French upon the neighbouring states, and in order to restrain the German Communists and Socialists who might emulate the French, Nicolas wanted on the spur of the moment to move an army three thousand strong to the Rhine. He was supported in his bellicose mood by Paskevich who was then in Petrograd. But his other advisers (Volkonsky, Kiselev) proved to him without difficulty that even if he had enough troops, he did not have enough money. Hence the pugnacious and indignant mood of Nicolas had to be relieved at first merely in a queer manifesto issued March 14, 1848, which was full of threats for the Western enemies and rebels (although there was no evidence of an attempted attack against Russia), and ended with

this self-reliant outburst: "God is with us! Take heed, O nations, and submit, for God is with us!"

Soon, however, events in Austria where part after part of the Empire had begun to break off, and the appeal of the youthful Franz Joseph to Nicolas, induced the Tzar to employ more vigorous action which saved the Monarchy of the Hapsburgs from what generally appeared its inevitable decomposition and ruin. Some assert that Nicolas extended his aid to Franz Joseph not only out of a desire to uphold legal authorities against revolting nationalities, but also out of practical, selfish considerations which were supported especially by Paskevich who insisted that unless the Hungarian revolt were suppressed it would inevitably spread over the Kingdom of Poland, and in that case the events of 1831 would be repeated. The Hungarian uprising was quickly quelled by the much superior Russian forces led by Prince Paskevich whose stupid actions, however, had considerably shaken his reputation of a talented general.

After the suppression of the Hungarian uprising Nicolas became for a time the supreme dictator of Central and Eastern Europe. He forced the weak, vacillating king of Prussia to reject all plans about a "United Germany" and about the annexation of the Danish provinces which Nicolas considered belonged by right to Austria. At the same time he demanded from Friedrich Wilhelm more rigorous penalties for the revolutionary elements in Prussia, especially in Prussian Poland. By his constant interference in German affairs and by his threats to all enemies of the established order, Nicolas acquired such a reputation that German mothers frightened their children with the name of the Tzar.

The revolutionary outbursts of 1848 aroused an extreme reactionism not only in the Emperor, but in all his family and court circle. The Heir particularly was imbued with that spirit; he agreed perfectly with the views his father expressed in the manifesto of March 14, 1848, and even approved of the tone in which

it was composed. Immediately upon its publication, Tzesarevich Alexander called all the commanders of the Guard-regiments together and read the manifesto to them; this was met with enthusiastic ovations. The officers of that time little resembled those of the last years of Alexander I — in this respect the twenty-five years' labours of Nicolas had been crowned with great success; but one can not fail noticing that the eradication of liberal ideas among the army was accompanied with a considerable lowering of its quality. The mechanical weeding out of all independent thought caused the Russian army, when it had to fight with European troops, to feel a dire lack of chiefs with an initiative, of educated officers and generals capable of independent thinking. . . .

The reactionary mood was immediately reflected on the internal policy. The Government tried to concentrate all conservative forces. In receiving a deputation of Petrograd nobles on March 21, 1848, the Tzar said: "Let us forget mutual grievances. Give your hand to one another, as brothers, as children of our mother-country, so that the last hand may reach me, and then, under my leadership, rest sure that no earthly power can disturb us." Articles about the firmness of the Bondage-Right began to appear in Governmental publications, and Kiselev himself said to his nephew, Miliutin, that "the peasant-question had burst." The same was categorically stated to a representative of the Smolensk nobility by Olsufiev, Court-Marshal of the Heir.

Entirely different was the reaction of the *intelligentzia* toward the stormy events of 1848. By that time the propaganda carried on under the direction of Bielinsky in Kraievsky's *Annals of the Fatherland,* and from 1847 — in the *Contemporary* of Panaiev and Nekrasov, had shown considerable results. In the Capitals, especially in Petrograd, and partly in the provinces, circles of progressive young men began to appear, peculiar salons where political, literary, and social problems were discussed; the

discussions could not take place in the press. Such were the famous Fridays at the home of M. B. Butashevich-Petrashevsky, the evenings at the homes of Durov, Kashkin, Mombelli, Pleshcheiev, and others. Petrashevsky's Fridays since 1845 served as a meeting place for numerous young men from the provinces and capitals, and they were the most popular gatherings among the *intelligentzia.* Petrashevsky himself was a Socialist (a Fourierist), but at his evenings all varieties of questions were brought up, most often the peasant-question, also questions of the judiciary — juries, publicity and independence of courts, of the Censorship and freedom of press, in a word, the very questions that were solved a few years later, during the epoch of the Great Reforms; at the same time they discussed literary and political news from Western Europe, and read such productions as could not appear in the press, as, for instance, the famous letter of Bielinsky to Gogol concerning the latter's *Selections from the Correspondence with My Friends.*

At Kashkin's assembled persons especially interested in social problems, young Socialists and Communists, followers of Saint-Simon, Leroux, Lamennais, Louis Blanc, Cabet, and particularly of Fourier. At Durov's more moderate thinkers gathered.

All those circles were known to one another, and kept up mutual relations. In the provinces embryos of similar organisations existed among admirers of *Annals of the Fatherland,* the *Contemporary,* and of their inspirer — Bielinsky. It is interesting that Ivan Aksakov who travelled through all Russia in the Forties, taking part in various revisions and investigations, and often serving in provincial courts, testified in his letters that on the gloomy background of the provincial life, amidst the society that consisted of all sorts of grafters, cheats, serf-drivers, scoundrels, and trivial nonentities,— the only bright exceptions were the followers of Bielinsky, the readers and admirers of the progressive Petrograd magazines. The Slavophils were little known in the provinces, their Almanachs were not read; pro-

vincial book-sellers directly declared to Aksakov that they did not buy those Almanachs because the *Annals of the Fatherland* and the *Contemporary* did not praise them. "Both Polevoy and Bielinsky," wrote Aksakov in 1856, "had an enormous influence on the public, though a bad, harmful influence (from his Slavophil point of view). I have been all over Russia: the name of Bielinsky is known to every youth who does any thinking, to every one who craves fresh air amidst the stagnant mire of provincial life. There is not one Gymnasium teacher who does not know Bielinsky's letter to Gogol by heart; in the remote corners of Russia his influence only begins to penetrate, increasing the number of proselytes. . . . 'We owe our salvation to Bielinsky,' honest young men in the provinces tell me. . . . And if you want an honest man, capable of compassion for ills and misfortunes, an honest physician, an honest coroner who would fight for truth, look for such in the provinces, among the followers of Bielinsky. Here one does not hear about Slavophilism, and if one hears — it is from a hostile side. . . ."

This testimony is valuable, as it comes from Ivan Aksakov who, although he had some differences with his brother, Constantine, about that time, was yet a devoted member of the Slavophils, and personally regarded Bielinsky quite negatively.

It can be understood how the progressive Russian society at the end of the Forties, who were for the most part Bielinsky's followers, were agitated and moved at the first news about the revolution of 1848. Aksakov himself admitted that the year 1848 "threw him out of his rut." Bakunin and Herzen were then abroad and were taking active part in the formidable events. Bakunin played a distinguished part in the popular insurrection at Dresden and in the Slav movement directed against the empire of the Hapsburgs.

The Government regarded the state of mind of the Petrograd *intelligentzia* with alarm, and doubtless exaggerated its political significance and possible consequences. It pounced first of all

upon the press. Had Bielinsky not died in May, 1848, he would have been arrested and punished not less severely than the Petrashevsky-circle were a year later.[1] With the first alarming news from the West the authorities took notice of the radical magazines. Admiral Prince Menshikov called the attention of the Heir to the bad influence of the universities and the press, and under his chairmanship a secret committee for the investigation of the matter was formed. Soon additional declarations in the same direction were received from Count Stroganov who was in disagreement with Uvarov, and from Baron Korf who had his eye on Uvarov's post. The secret committee was transformed into a permanent institution, under the chairmanship of the rabid reactionary and obscurantist, Count Buturlin; this so-called Buturlin-Committee was authorised by Nicolas to keep a watchful eye upon the press, and to call his attention to undesirable works even though they had passed the preliminary censorship. Buturlin had made the position of the press unendurable. Uvarov himself was regarded with suspicion, and when he inspired Professor Davidov to write an article in favour of the universities, in view of the rumours in circulation concerning their possible closing, Buturlin's Committee officially demanded his explanation for having let such an article pass through. Uvarov had to resign in October, 1849.

For some time Nicolas hesitated about the choice of his successor. In January, 1850, the Deputy-Minister, Prince Shirinsky-Shikhmatov presented a Memorandum to the Tzar in which he advocated the view that instruction in the universities should be based on religious truths, in connection with theology, and not on "philosophising." On reading that Memorandum Nicolas exclaimed: "Why look for a Minister of Education?

[1] Bielinsky was breathing his last, surrounded with his friends and wife, when a gendarme appeared at his rooms with an order for his arrest. Benckendorff raged when he found that his victim had escaped him.— TR.

Behold, he has been found." Jokers whispered on the occasion of his appointment that he would give education not only "check," but "mate" (a play of words in chess terms — Shikhmatov: shakh, i.e., check, and mat — mate).

But it was not a matter of joking for the universities. "It drives one insane," wrote Granovsky in 1850. "Good for Bielinsky who died in time." As early as May, 1849, the number of students in every university was limited to three hundred, outside of the medical and theological departments. Shirinsky-Shikhmatov opined that "the use of philosophy has not been proven, while its harm is probable," hence philosophy and metaphysics were eliminated, and the teaching of logic and psychology was handed over to professors of theology.

The censorship raged mercilessly, but the Buturlin-Committee was not satisfied with the present, and endeavoured to discover past sins on the part of individual censors, in which cases they were put under arrest, regardless of age, rank, and profession. Thus Professor Kutorga, who was no longer a censor, was arrested for having long before passed some ambiguous German verses. Signs of "sedition" were discovered not only in the universities, but even among privileged institutions, like the School of Law, or the Alexandrine Lyceum, whose suspected pupils were recruited into the army, expelled, severely penalised. In those years many writers suffered punishment. Saltykov was exiled to Viatka, to serve with the Governor. Turgeniev was arrested in 1852 and kept at a police-station for a successful attempt to evade the watchfulness of the censor. Yuriy Samarin was imprisoned for a few days in a fortress for sharp remarks about the actions of the Ostsee administration, while Ivan Aksakov for certain expressions in a letter to his relatives concerning the arrest of Samarin, was arrested at the Third Department. The arrests of Samarin and Aksakov ended quite graciously for both. Nicolas had a personal "instructive" conversation with Samarin, and wrote out some curious "resolu-

tions" for Aksakov in a laconic order to Prince Orlov: "Call (him), read (this), exhort (him), release (him)." But the mild ending of those affairs did not prevent the Government from forbidding Ivan Aksakov from editing any publications, after the appearance of the most innocent Slavophil "Almanach" in 1852, and enjoining the contributors of the Almanach, Constantine Aksakov, Yuriy Samarin, Khomiakov, Koshelev, and others, from submitting their writings for publication. The Government acted considerably more severely and ruthlessly in cases of outspoken "sedition," as in the case of the Petrashevsky-group, twenty men of which were sentenced to hard labour, exile to Siberia, and reduction of rank to private; for the purpose of "frightening" them they had to go through fictitious preparations for execution. Yet the affair, although called a "conspiracy," offered no grounds for incriminating the members with any actions, so that even Baron Korf who bitterly disliked the Petrashevsky-circle, said that it was a "conspiracy of ideas." Among those condemned in that process was F. M. Dostoievsky who was sentenced to hard labour. The Government punished the members of the Kiev "Society of Cyril and Methody," which had shown federalistic tendencies, with equal severity; among them were: Shevchenko, Kostomarov, Kulish, Bielozersky, Markovitch, and others.

Beside the obscurantist measures of the Government in the field of popular education, against the press and the universities, we may mention the following of its reactionary undertakings: the prohibition to go abroad without the personal permission of the Tzar, which was given only in very rare cases, and the introduction of the so-called Third paragraph into the Civil Service Statute, by which the authorities were empowered to dismiss officials considered "untrustworthy" (politically), without trial or even explanation.

"The heart aches at the thought of what we had been, and what we have become now," wrote Granovsky to Herzen in

1853. The public prostration and the consciousness of their impotence in face of the terrible oppression of the reaction were so strong among the educated classes, that even such patriots as the Slavophil Koshelev admitted later that the defeats of the Russian troops in the war with Turkey, which broke out in 1853, did not grieve them much. On the contrary, they felt that the graver the foreign situation became the weaker grew the oppression at home.

When in 1853 the war with Turkey began, which was unsuccessful from the very start, and later complicated by the intervention of France, England, and Sardinia, and by the constant threats of ungrateful Austria, though she had been saved by Nicolas only five years before; when Russia's backwardness and unpreparedness, and complete lack of faithful and talented generals were revealed — the self-reliance of the Tzar, so defiantly expressed in his manifesto of March 14, 1848, and in his address to the Petrograd nobility, began to flag, and his proud spirit was unable to bear the unprecedented humiliation.

The foreign storm gradually softened the iron régime within Russia. Although all the reactionary measures promulgated after 1848 remained intact to the very end of the reign, sensitive men felt even in 1853 the approach of a thaw. "It seemed," A. I. Koshelev wrote in his memoirs, "as if out of a depressing, dark dungeon we were emerging if not into God's light, at least into an ante-chamber where we could sense refreshing air."

In society, even among conservative circles an indicting, oppositional attitude toward the Government awakened, and even Pogodin, who in the Forties had edited the *Muscovite,* now wrote daring letters of challenge addressed to the Tzar. Khomiakov wrote his virile poems breathing with religious denunciation of the sinful Government. The mood of the masses was also alarming. On one hand, the people showed heroic self-

sacrifice in the struggle with the enemy, on the other hand, the mobilised militia, considering that service for the Tzar and the country freed them from bondage (by the very statutes recruits were excluded from the class of bondmen), refused to obey their landowners and police officials, and committed disturbances and riots.

For many it had become evident that the hour for the abolition of serfdom had struck, and that the entire system had inevitably to be reorganised. It is uncertain what would have been the policy of Nicolas after the unfortunate Crimean War of 1853–1856. He did not live to see its end. Death delivered him from the necessity of liquidating his own governmental policy, the inefficiency of which had been amply demonstrated by the time of his passing away.

In summarising these remarkable thirty years, we must admit that the governmental system of Nicolas I was one of the most consequential of attempts to realise the idea of enlightened absolutism. Nicolas did not in his views resemble Louis XIV; he would not have said, *L'état — c'est moi;* on the contrary, he declared many times that he considered himself the first servant of the state; but to the will of the first servant all others had unreservedly to submit. In his intentions Nicolas was rather akin to such representatives of enlightened despotism as Joseph II and Friedrich the Great. He endeavoured, as we have seen, to realise the system recommended by Karamzin in his Memorandum, "On Ancient and New Russia." If Karamzin had lived through the reign of Nicolas, he would have had to admit that his system had been given a trial, and he would have become convinced to what that system inevitably led, especially in such an enormous, sparsely populated, and rapidly developing country as Russia.

To Nicolas' mind every Governor should have been the master of his province, and he, the Emperor, the master of the empire;

just such a master as Friedrich the Great had been in his comparatively diminutive Prussia, where he was able to know how almost every peasant lived and worked.

For the very size of the Russian Empire, and because of the relatively meagre means in the hands of the Government, in spite of its apparently full authority, such a task could not possibly be realised. As a brilliant illustration of the impotence of the bureaucratic administration, take the famous story about a certain order of the Tzar, which had not been fulfilled despite the twenty-three confirmations it had received. The weaker and slower the means, the cruder were the forms in which the authorities expressed their power, and the more striking their abuses. The best Ministers of Nicolas' reign — Kankrin and Kiselev — particularly resemble the men of the epoch of enlightened despotism; but the majority of his other assistants, especially those of his later years, were incapable men, often covetous and false lackeys, with no convictions or views of their own.

At the same time it was one of the most important epochs in the development and ripening of national life in Russia. The rapidly increasing density of the population in the central black-soil provinces, the destruction of the former foundations of the landowners' bondage-estates after the Napoleonic wars, the growing antagonism between the bondmen and their masters, the new demands and needs of commerce and industry in connection with the altered universal conjunctures — all these placed before the Government a number of difficult tasks which required for their fulfilment not only the presence of remarkable statesmen, but the broad participation of the entire *intelligentzia* of the country, and the free and fast growth of education in the land. This was prevented by the administrative system that had developed in a consequential *crescendo* during the whole reign of Nicolas.

The wounds of Russia, revealed by the Crimean Campaign, became so evident, that the advent of an epoch of reforms appeared inevitable. It fell upon the shoulders of Alexander II to realise those reforms.

END OF VOLUME I

ADDENDA

On pages 74, 12th line from the bottom; 75, lines 9 and 12 from the top; 78, lines 13, 21 from top and line 4 from bottom, read Pahlen for Palen.

On page 147, line 6 from the bottom, read Gotorp for Hotorp.

On pages 189, line 7 from top; 225, line 12 and line 22 from top; 233, line 15 from bottom, read Philaret for Filaret.

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